United Nations S/PV.6425

Security Council

Sixty-fifth year

Provisional

6425th meeting

Tuesday, 16 November 2010, 9.30 a.m.

New York

President	Mr. Hague	(United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)
Members	Austria	Mr. Spindelegger
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Mr. Alkalaj
	Brazil	Mr. Patriota
	China	Mr. Li Baodong
	France	Mr. Araud
	Gabon	Mr. Issoze-Ngondet
	Japan	Mr. Matsumoto
	Lebanon	Mr. Salam
	Mexico	Mr. Heller
	Nigeria	Mr. Ajumogobia
	Russian Federation	Mr. Churkin
	Turkey	Mr. Apakan
	Uganda	Mr. Okello Oryem
	United States of America	Mrs. Rodham Clinton

Agenda

Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan

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The meeting was called to order at 9.40 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan

The President: In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 37 of its provisional rules of procedure to His Excellency Mr. Ali Ahmed Karti, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Sudan.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Karti (Sudan) took a seat at the Council table.

The President: On behalf of the Council, I welcome Mr. Karti.

In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Mr. Pagan Amum, Secretary General of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement.

It is so decided.

I invite Mr. Amum to take a seat at the Council table.

In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Mr. Thabo Mbeki, Chairperson of the African Union High-Level Implementation Panel for Sudan.

It is so decided.

On behalf of the Council, I wish to welcome Mr. Mbeki, who is joining today's meeting via video teleconference from Johannesburg.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Security Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

After consultations among members of the Security Council, I have been authorized to make the following statement on behalf of the Council:

"The Security Council emphasizes that the situation in the Sudan represents one of the most urgent challenges facing the Council.

"The Security Council reaffirms its strong commitment to the sovereignty, independence, peace and stability of the Sudan, and to a peaceful and prosperous future for all Sudanese people, and underlines its support for the Sudanese parties' full and timely implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA), including the holding of the referendums on the self-determination of the people of Southern Sudan and on the status of Abyei, and of the popular consultations in Southern Kordofan and Blue Nile, and for a peaceful, comprehensive and inclusive resolution of the situation in Darfur.

"The Security Council recalls that the Sudanese parties have full responsibility for the implementation of the CPA, reaffirms its support for and encourages their further efforts to that end and welcomes the leadership of the African Union and the support provided by the African Union High-Level Implementation Panel, under the leadership of President Thabo Mbeki, and by the Intergovernmental Authority on Development.

"The Security Council recognizes the parties' commitment to CPA implementation, remains actively seized of the matter and expresses its readiness to act as necessary in support of full implementation of the CPA by the parties. The Council underlines the importance of close coordination between international actors involved in assisting the Sudanese peace processes.

"The Security Council urges the CPA parties, while working to make unity attractive and recognizing the right to self-determination of the people of Southern Sudan, to take urgent action to implement their commitment, reaffirmed at the High-Level Meeting on the Sudan held in New York on 24 September, to ensure peaceful, credible, timely and free referendums that reflect the will of the people of Southern Sudan and Abyei, as provided for in the CPA.

"In this regard, the Security Council welcomes the start of registration for the Southern Sudan referendum on 15 November and

encourages further efforts to ensure that the referendums are held on 9 January 2011 in accordance with the CPA and as scheduled in the timeline published for the Southern Sudan referendum by the Southern Sudan Referendum Commission.

"The Security Council is concerned by the continued delays in releasing to the Southern Sudan Referendum Commission the full funding needed for preparations to continue to move forward. The Security Council calls on the parties and all Member States to respect the outcome of credible referendums, held in accordance with the CPA, that reflect the will of the people of Southern Sudan and Abyei. It requests all parties to refrain from unilateral action and to implement the CPA.

"The Security Council underlines the importance of the CPA parties' making rapid progress on a way forward for Abyei's referendum and outstanding CPA issues, and on resolving critical post-referendum issues in a peaceful, mutually beneficial manner, including the border, security, citizenship, debts, assets, currency and natural resources.

"In this context, the Security Council welcomes progress in the negotiations, led by President Mbeki, towards a framework for resolving outstanding issues relating to the implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement and the future relations of North and South Sudan, on which agreement was reached on 13 November. The Security Council urges the parties to resume negotiations on Abyei expeditiously and to reach agreement on all outstanding issues without further delay.

"The Security Council underlines the need for the CPA parties to promote calm, including by providing immediate and ongoing reassurance to people of all nationalities in the Sudan, including southerners in the North and northerners in the South, that their rights, safety and property will be respected whatever the outcome of the referendums. The Security Council calls for an immediate end to statements threatening the security of vulnerable populations. The Security Council also emphasizes that protection of civilians is primarily the responsibility of the Sudanese authorities. The Security Council urges the parties to work actively with local leaders to mitigate tensions in Abyei and other border areas.

"The Security Council reaffirms its support for the United Nations Mission in the Sudan (UNMIS) and reiterates its call for all parties to cooperate fully with the Mission in the discharge of its mandate in this crucial period, in particular by ensuring full, unhindered access and freedom of movement for UNMIS personnel and equipment, and for the delivery of referendum materials. The Security Council welcomes and encourages the United Nations work in contingency planning around the referendums and calls on Member States to support UNMIS efforts.

"The Security Council reaffirms its support for the United Nations Secretary-General's Panel for the Referendums led by President Benjamin Mkapa. The Security Council underlines the importance of close coordination between the Panel and all domestic and international observation missions.

"The Security Council underlines that, whatever the outcome of the referendums, continued cooperation between the CPA parties will remain essential for managing the transition process, implementing the post-referendum arrangements and maintaining peace and prosperity, and stresses the mutual benefits of partnership in this regard. The Council encourages the international community to support these efforts. The Council urges the CPA parties to respect their obligations.

"The Security Council reaffirms its support for the African Union-United Nations-led peace process for Darfur, hosted by the State of Qatar, the work of Joint Chief Mediator Djibril Bassolé and the principles guiding the negotiations. The Council strongly urges all rebel movements to join the peace process without further delay or preconditions, and all parties immediately to cease hostilities and engage constructively in negotiations with a view to finding a lasting peace in Darfur. The Security Council expresses concern about attacks on civilians by militias and calls for all support to such groups to cease. The Security Council expresses its willingness to

consider measures against any party whose actions undermine peace in Darfur.

"The Security Council expresses deep concern about the increases in violence and insecurity in Darfur, including ceasefire violations, attacks by rebel groups, aerial bombardment by the Government of the Sudan, increased inter-tribal fighting, and attacks on humanitarian personnel and peacekeepers, which have restricted humanitarian access to conflict areas where vulnerable populations reside. In this context, the Security Council calls on all parties to protect civilians and maintain full, safe and unhindered access for humanitarian workers to the population in need of assistance. The Security Council notes the need to support efforts to halt arms flows into Darfur in contravention of the arms embargo strengthened by resolution 1945 (2010). The Security Council recalls the importance it attaches to an end to impunity, and to justice for crimes committed in Darfur.

"The Security Council reaffirms its support for the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur and reiterates its call on the Government of the Sudan and all relevant parties to cooperate fully with the mission in discharging its mandate, and to provide full unhindered access and freedom of movement, as well as its call for an end to impunity for those who attack peacekeepers and humanitarian workers.

"The Security Council welcomes improved relations between the Sudan and Chad and encourages them to cooperate further in order to contribute to peace and stability in Darfur and the wider region.

"The Security Council encourages full implementation of the Eastern Sudan Peace Agreement, including the provisions regarding rehabilitation, recovery and development, and welcomes the initiative of the Government of Kuwait to hold a conference on investment and development in Eastern Sudan in December 2010.

"The Security Council calls for respect for international law, international human rights law and humanitarian law; protection of freedom of expression; humanitarian access across the Sudan, including in the border areas; and an end to all harassment of civil society. The Security Council underlines the importance of increased participation of women in the Sudanese peace processes.

"The Council notes the considerable humanitarian, early recovery and peacebuilding needs of the Sudan and encourages the Sudanese authorities and international donors to fulfil their pledges to address them.

"The Security Council underlines that full and timely implementation of the CPA is essential to peace and stability in the Sudan and the region and to future cooperation between the Sudan and the international community, and recognizes that enduring cooperation between the parties will be essential for the benefit of all Sudanese people. The Council affirms that the core objective of the international community and all stakeholders in the Sudan is the peaceful coexistence of the people of the Sudan, democratic governance, rule of law, accountability, equality, respect, human rights, justice and economic development, in particular the establishment of the conditions for conflict affected communities to build, strong, sustainable livelihoods."

This statement will be issued as a document of the Security Council under the symbol S/PRST/2010/24.

I welcome the presence of the Secretary-General, His Excellency Mr. Ban Ki-moon, and invite him to take the floor.

The Secretary-General: I thank you, Sir, for this opportunity to address the Council at a moment of critical importance for the Sudanese people and for the subregion. In less than two months, the people of Southern Sudan will exercise their right to vote on the future of the South, as provided for in the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) of 2005 and as supported by this Council and the international community.

The registration process for the referendum has begun throughout Southern Sudan, as well as in 165 locations in the North and eight foreign countries. I commend the Southern Sudan Referendum Commission for this achievement. With the commencement of this process, the referendum is on track.

To ensure that the referendum is conducted in an orderly fashion and that the Sudanese people

peacefully accept the outcome, it is imperative that the process be credible and transparent, and that it reflect the aspirations of the population.

I remain concerned by delays in the preparations, partly resulting from considerable national funding shortfalls. All remaining obstacles should be removed so that the Referendum Commission can finance its operations; appoint, train and deploy the necessary personnel; and take key decisions without delay.

The international community, including the United Nations family, non-governmental organizations and donors, stands ready to provide further assistance. The United Nations Mission in the Sudan continues to give technical and logistical support to the Southern Sudan Referendum Commission and is deploying additional staff to assist the process. The African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) will contribute aviation assets, and the United Nations Development Programme and the International Organization for Migration are assisting in the procurement of materials and out-of-country voting.

I have also established a Panel, chaired by former President of Tanzania Benjamin Mkapa, to monitor the referendums for Southern Sudan and the Abyei area. The Panel is in the country to monitor the first week of the registration process. I call on the Sudanese parties to make the most of its presence.

In addition to this direct support to the process, the humanitarian community has developed a contingency plan to provide timely assistance in the event of referendum-related violence. Approximately $63 million are needed to pre-position humanitarian assistance near potential hotspots. We will also need to ensure access to the contested border areas. The Council's support in these efforts would be welcome.

Notwithstanding the international community's good will and support, the referendums are Sudanese processes. The commitment of the international community cannot supplant the willingness of the parties to meet their responsibilities. The Government of the Sudan, the Government of Southern Sudan and the referendum Commissions must rise to this challenge.

The CPA parties have reiterated their responsibility on several occasions, not only for the organization and conduct of the referendums, but also for the preservation of security and the creation of an environment conducive to the exercise of civil and political rights. In this regard, the protection of Southern Sudanese who live in the North, and of northerners who live in the South, is of major concern. So, too, is the possibility of a return to the suffering and loss of life seen during the long war between the North and the South.

I welcome the recent statement by ministers of the Governments of the Sudan and Southern Sudan that a return to war is not an option. Yet, we have also heard hostile public statements and accusations of ceasefire violations, which risk heightening anxiety and provoking isolated security incidents that can escalate into a wider conflict. The potential for an unintentional conflict is especially high in Abyei, where the Misseriya will soon begin their annual southward migration with emotions running high and where little progress has been made in finding a solution to the political impasse.

We are working with both parties on options for possible augmentation of United Nations troops to increase referendum and post-referendum security as well as to increase our capacity to verify and monitor possible ceasefire violations and to protect civilians throughout the mission area. However, the presence of United Nations troops will not be enough to prevent a return to war should wide-spread hostilities erupt. Only a demonstrated commitment by the parties to refrain from inflammatory statements, uphold the CPA ceasefire mechanisms and reassure the population of their willingness to work together will succeed in maintaining peace.

To that end, negotiations on post-referendum arrangements are vital in order to address the apprehensions of the Sudanese population. The need is particularly acute in Abyei, where confusion and fear about post-referendum citizenship, grazing rights, access to water points and oil revenue sharing are contributing to a political and security minefield.

I am encouraged that the CPA parties are discussing these and other issues through negotiations facilitated by the African Union High-Level Implementation Panel for Sudan. I urge them to break the deadlock on Abyei, move towards holding a credible referendum in Southern Sudan and design a peaceful and prosperous future for Northern and Southern Sudan in which the protection and security of

minority populations is assured, irrespective of the outcome of the referendum.

This brings me to the situation in Darfur, where there remains an urgent need to reach a comprehensive and inclusive settlement. The Joint Chief Mediator, with the support of the Government of Qatar and other partners, has made progress. He is consulting with the parties on possible compromises on outstanding issues, the most important of which is the administrative status of Darfur.

The Doha settlement has been designed so that other movements — particularly the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) and Sudan Liberation Army (SLA)-Abdul Wahid — can join the process. Mr. Bassole continues to consult with them with a view to engaging them in the negotiations. I welcome steps taken by JEM to rejoin the process and their recent high-level presence in Doha.

Unfortunately, renewed clashes are taking place on the ground between the Sudan armed forces and the JEM, and hostilities are continuing between the Sudan armed forces and SLA-Abdul Wahid in Jebel Marra.

I am deeply concerned at the impact of those hostilities on innocent civilians, which is completely unacceptable, and stress again the urgent need for full access to eastern Jebel Marra, where the humanitarian situation is reportedly dire. I urge members of the Council to join me in demanding that all restrictions placed by the parties on the movement of UNAMID and the humanitarian community be lifted. The disturbing implication of that fighting is that the parties have not yet decided to give up the military path.

I therefore make four specific requests of the Council.

First, encourage the Government and the movements to show flexibility as the Joint Chief Mediator searches with them for compromises. For any agreement to gain traction inside Darfur, it must address the roots of the conflict and end the marginalization of the region. That will require significant concessions in the areas of power and wealth sharing, and genuine efforts to address questions of national and international justice and of truth and reconciliation.

Second, encourage movements outside of the process to engage and demonstrate, through concrete measures, their commitment to the peace process. It is particularly important to urge the Government and JEM to renew their cessation-of-hostilities agreement and negotiate cease-fire protocols.

Third, support the outcome of the Doha process and the work that will follow to generate a popular consensus on the terms of peace.

Fourth, encourage the Government of the Sudan to undertake concrete actions to address the demands of the people of Darfur for security, particularly in relation to criminality and impunity, respect for their political and civil rights, and economic support to rebuild their lives and return to their homes should they wish to do so. To the same end, I call upon the Sudan to act in accordance with the Council's decision as outlined in resolution 1593 (2005).

The coming months are likely to be difficult for the people of the Sudan and the international community engaged there. The referendum has the potential to change the future of the country and send shockwaves throughout the region. The international community and the CPA parties, having emphasized the importance of making unity attractive during the past five years, must now respect the right of the population of Southern Sudan to decide.

As we move forward, we must recall that the referendum, as momentous as it may appear, is one element of an agreement that ended a bitter war. That same agreement also paved the way for deepening democratization and development inside the Sudan, as well as improved regional stability. The Sudanese parties must recognize that the vision of a new Sudan, articulated in the CPA, remains as valid today as it was half a decade ago, regardless of the outcome of the referendum.

By renewing the trust achieved in 2005, the parties can develop productive models of association and cooperation. Doing so will also have a seminal and positive impact for the final resolution of the conflict in Darfur.

The role of the Council remains essential. I urge you to help build bridges between the north and south and, in the same spirit, to ensure that the fundamental imbalances fuelling conflict elsewhere in the Sudan are addressed so that Darfur can be brought into a stable, prosperous and equitable future for the Sudan.

I look forward to continuing to work closely with the Security Council as the referendums draw near and as we seek to help the Sudan meet those critical tests.

The President: I thank the Secretary-General for his statement.

I am now hoping to give the floor to Mr. Thabo Mbeki, Chairperson of the African Union High-Level Implementation Panel for Sudan. We cannot see him on the screen since there has been a power failure in Johannesburg, but I believe he can hear us and that we may be able to hear him.

Mr. Mbeki: I can assure you, Mr. President, there is no problem in Johannesburg; the failure is in the lines.

The African Union High-Level Implementation Panel for Sudan would like to thank the Council for giving us the opportunity to address the Council for the second time this year.

As the Council is aware, three of the urgent challenges facing the Sudan are, one, the implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA); two, negotiating the post-referendum arrangement; and three, achieving a just and lasting peace in Darfur.

With regard to the first challenge, we would like to confirm that the registration of voters for the Southern Sudan referendum started yesterday. We are convinced that everybody concerned is determined to ensure that the entire referendum process proceeds in a manner that will contribute to the credibility of the referendum. As part of this process, the political parties, including the National Congress Party (NCP) and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM), have acceded to the code of conduct prepared by our Panel, which binds them to ensure free and fair referendums and popular consultations. At the same time, they have committed themselves to respecting the outcome of the referendum.

To support the referendum process, the Panel will sustain its close contact with the Southern Sudan Referendum Commission, the United Nations Mission in the Sudan (UNMIS), the NCP, the Government of the Sudan, the SPLM, the Government of the Southern Sudan, the United Nations monitoring panel headed by His Excellency Mr. Benjamin Mkapa, and the Political Parties Council which is responsible for the implementation of the code of conduct.

Secondly, during the week beginning Monday, 22 November, our Panel will facilitate negotiations involving Their Excellencies President Omer Hassan Al-Bashir and First Vice-President Salva Kiir Mayardit to resolve the Abyei matter. These principals have agreed that, with the assistance of our Panel, they will do everything possible to reach an agreement on this issue as a matter of urgency. In this context, we would also like to take this opportunity to commend the Sudan Council of Churches for the initiative it has taken to convene an important meeting of the leaders of the Ngok Dinka and the Misseriya, which will be held in about 10 days.

Thirdly, the Technical Ad Hoc Border Committee will begin immediately to demarcate the North-South border. Similarly, the political committee of the NCP and the SPLM is ready to begin discussions on the five disputed areas along the border.

Fourthly, partners remain committed to maintaining peace and are therefore using the structures created by the CPA that involve UNMIS to address all matters relating to the task of sustaining peace and security. To assist in this regard, our Panel maintains regular contact with the parties, as well as with UNMIS.

As members of the Council know, our Panel serves as the facilitator of the negotiations to conclude the post-referendum arrangements, which we launched on 10 July. And as the Council also knows, the negotiations include such matters as security, citizenship, oil and water resources, currency matters, assets and liabilities, international treaties and agreements. The parties have indeed been engaging each other on these issues. However, our Panel is concerned that the discussions are not proceeding at a satisfactory pace. We will therefore convene a special meeting with the parties before the end of this month to agree on the ways and means by which we can accelerate and better coordinate the negotiations.

In this regard, we would like to inform the Council of the important meeting of the parties — the SPLM and the NCP — that our Panel convened in Khartoum between 7 and 13 November at the request of the parties, and which Special Representative of the Secretary-General Haile Menkerios and United States Special Envoy Scott Gration and Ambassador Princeton Lyman attended as observers. The meeting agreed to a seminal document that contains, first, a

framework of principles that will guide the work of the parties on all issues and inform the relations between the North and Southern Sudan regardless of the outcome of the Southern Sudan referendum. Secondly, it contains decisions relating to the implementation of the outstanding CPA matters, to which I have referred. Thirdly, it contains decisions that will guide the content of the negotiations relating to the post-referendum arrangements.

The document, entitled "Framework for Resolving Outstanding Issues Relating to the Implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement and the Future Relations of North and South Sudan", will be completed, signed and published once the negotiations on Abyei, which I have mentioned, have been concluded.

Recent and current events in Darfur, especially relating to the clashes between the Sudanese Armed Forces and the rebel Justice and Equality Movement, which the Secretary-General mentioned, have underlined the need urgently to bring peace to Darfur. In this context, I am certain that the Council is aware of the decisions adopted at the 6 November meeting of the Sudan Consultative Forum in Addis Ababa. I refer here specifically to the decision that our Panel and the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID), supported by the Government of Qatar, should, in December and ahead of the Southern Sudan referendum, initiate a political process in Darfur that would lead to the convening of an inclusive Darfur-Darfur conference. The conference will base its discussions on the outcomes of the Doha negotiations and on other relevant documents, such as the report of the African Union Panel on Darfur. It will take the necessary decisions that would contribute to the earliest possible conclusion of a global political agreement on Darfur.

We have also agreed with the Government of the Sudan that, in the meantime, it should take all necessary action, in cooperation with UNAMID, to improve the security situation in Darfur, to facilitate the voluntary return of refugees and internally displaced persons to their places of origin, and therefore to begin to address issues of recovery and development, and to address the issue of justice and reconciliation. We believe that we will see progress in all of these areas in the next few months.

We are pleased to inform the Council that both President Al-Bashir and First Vice-President Salva Kiir Mayardit have continued to extend full cooperation to our Panel, driven by a shared determination to do everything possible and necessary to address the various Sudanese challenges. We trust that the Council will convey a firm message of encouragement to them as they work jointly and severally over the next few months, which will be critical in determining the future of the Sudan and, to that extent, the future of Africa.

As we have done in the past, we commend both UNMIS and UNAMID for the valuable work they are doing and reiterate our appreciation of the excellent cooperation they consistently extend to our Panel. Accordingly, we trust that the Council will continue to provide them with such support as they may need.

The President: I would like to thank Mr. Mbeki for his briefing and for all of the work that he is undertaking, and particularly for speaking to the Council from such a distance. Although we could not see him, let me assure him that we listened very carefully to what he said. I take back everything I said about a power failure in Johannesburg. We will blame New York, instead, for all of the technical difficulties.

I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Ali Ahmed Karti, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Sudan.

Mr. Karti (Sudan) (*spoke in Arabic*): Allow me at the outset to congratulate all peace-loving peoples and countries of the world on the occasion of Eid al-Adha. We meet today while the Islamic world and Muslims everywhere celebrate this important holiday. I also congratulate you, Sir, on your keen determination to organize these deliberations on the Sudan at this opportune time. I also would like, through you, to congratulate and commend Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, my brothers the Ministers and in the delegation of the Government of the Southern Sudan. I had hoped they would be sitting next to me rather than on the other side of the table. We shared the same title in the meeting in Addis Ababa and in a meeting sponsored by the Government of Austria.

I truly hope that the Council's deliberations today will lead to a reasonable and wise approach that will assist the two parties in achieving comprehensive peace in a manner that will realize our objective of sustainable peace and security without returning to war and conflict.

As I am addressing the Council for the first time, I wish to assure members of my Government's total commitment to completing the final stages of the requirements of the Agreement, including the holding of the referendum on the right to self-determination of the Southern Sudan, as well as the referendum on the situation in the Abyei region. Should the Council recall the efforts made to implement the Agreement over the past years and the obstacles that have been overcome, it will see that both parties are capable of arriving at political settlements to the pending questions, which will enable us to undertake a just, impartial and credible referendum that will allow our brothers in the South to express their genuine will, free of undue influence.

The referendum is a commitment that must be honoured, and we are willing to do so. However, we must all understand that the referendum is not an end in and of itself, but a means that must lead us to peace and stability.

The agreement to grant Southern Sudan the right to self-determination is among the more daring decisions adopted anywhere on the African continent. It was taken with a view to ending the civil war and finding a peaceful conclusion to one of the most protracted conflicts on the continent. At the national level, it is the most daring decision taken by any national Government since independence. Here, I would like to draw the Council's attention to the fact that the leadership that adopted these decisions must be appreciated and commended rather than pressured, maligned or falsely accused.

Before this Council, I reaffirm the commitment of the Government of the Sudan to holding the referendum as scheduled and to accepting its outcome, be it in favour of unity or secession. The Government of the Sudan accepted the referendum in order to settle all pending issues peacefully. This choice should therefore be brought to a clear conclusion. Accordingly, the holding of the referendum should enhance peace and stability in the Sudan and serve as a prelude to a bright future and a new tomorrow for the whole of the Sudan, South and North alike.

Allow me in this context to raise an important issue, which is the financing of the Southern Sudan Referendum Commission. As members of the Council may well know, it was agreed that the Commission would be financed in the following proportions: 48 per cent by the two parties to the Agreement and 50 per cent by the international community. The Government of the Sudan has honoured this commitment as agreed, and apportioned its share against encumbered obligations provided by the Commission. The Government of the Sudan has paid, to date, a total of $8.5 million as a first instalment. The Government had actually begun payments even before the Commission prepared the referendum budget. We will continue to work accordingly and to honour our financial commitments every time the Commission provides us with a schedule of costs.

Since our Government has committed itself to paying its dues in full, we call on the international community, and the donor community in particular, to honour their commitments in order to avoid any disruption in the Commission's work. I would point out that when some talk of the failure of the Government to commit to financing, it is simply an attempt to expedite the actual expenditure, which should be decided by the Commission's programme of action.

With regard to the status of Abyei, it should be recalled that when we talk of Abyei, we are talking about two separate ethnic groups that have coexisted in the region since time immemorial; we are not talking about oil or wealth, which will eventually be depleted. We are talking about the legitimate and inalienable rights to citizenship and self-determination of two of the largest ethnic groups in the region, and about the status of the region in which they live. It therefore behooves us to rely on reason and to be inspired by wisdom if we seek to guarantee continued stability and ensure the age-old peaceful coexistence of the people of the region.

We recall these positive factors because we fully understand that arriving at an objective settlement accepted by both parties is our ultimate aim. We do not want to rush into imposing solutions that would only lead to further conflict. We therefore look to the Security Council to adopt a comprehensive approach to addressing the question of Abyei and the implementation of the pending aspects of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA).

I wish to stress the need for the international community to grasp the significance of the achievements made so far in implementing the CPA. The Council must assist both parties to the Agreement in working towards rapprochement and promoting

confidence between them so that they can overcome the obstacles to implementing and honouring their remaining commitments effectively and peacefully.

While we continue to make intensive efforts to settle the aforementioned issues before the holding of the referendum, we also continue to address with the same determination questions relating to wealth, citizenship and security, as well as post-referendum legal international agreements and instruments. I have come to New York after participating in a meeting hosted by the Government of Austria at which we discussed with our brothers from the Sudan People's Liberation Movement the scope of the relationship between North and South and the post-referendum situation. We stressed the fact that integration between the North and the South should continue regardless of the outcome of the referendum.

I would like to update the Council on the major progress that has been made recently towards the conclusion of a framework agreement to govern relations between the North and the South. Both parties to the CPA read and discussed the draft framework agreement endorsed last night by the African Union High-Level Implementation Panel led by Mr. Thabo Mbeki, former President of South Africa. This historical agreement sheds light on the strategic choices between the North and the South, the most important of which is their shared resolve never to return to war. The historic framework agreement sets forth a blueprint for a very special and distinguished relationship between North and South in which peace, understanding and harmony prevail and both parties can work for a better future. We will inform the Council of the details in due time.

The achievement of the framework agreement places a major responsibility on the shoulders of the international community that is no less weighty than the commitments of both parties. Translating this agreement into reality will require tireless efforts and continuous encouragement, as well as a continued flow of resources. I would therefore appeal to the Council to grant particular attention and care to this issue.

With regard to the situation in Darfur, our position on the comprehensive political settlement is indisputable. Our Government has always been the first to implement all its commitments with regard to negotiations. It has been willing to discuss issues in good faith so as to achieve peace and stability throughout Darfur. Moreover, from this very seat, I would like to commend the Doha mediation efforts under the auspices of the fraternal Government of Qatar, the League of Arab States, the African Union and the United Nations under the guidance of Mr. Bassolé, and supported by the countries of the region. Peace in Darfur is our highest priority and the strategic objective for the Government of the Sudan at this stage. However, the realization of peace and the signing of an agreement require a partner that would negotiate in good faith. It also requires a clear vision and determination to achieve peace.

Therefore, the much-reported positions of two of the rebel leaders, who oppose the political settlement in Doha and opted for the military option as the sole option, require the Council to send a serious and decisive message. That message should compel both sides to sit down at the negotiating table in Doha.

It is unreasonable and unacceptable for peace to be held hostage to controversial and arrogant positions that are not related to the desires and expectations of the people of Darfur, who chose peace and who hope that it will become a reality for them in different areas of the region. They made that choice despite irresponsible military actions and violations, including kidnappings and attacks against humanitarian assistance convoys and peacekeepers. Such destructive acts by the rebels who reject peace are aimed at distracting the Government and pushing it towards a military confrontation and the creation of instability in the region.

As the Council knows, the Government of the Sudan, while making every effort to promote security and stability in Darfur, has adopted a strategy that is currently being implemented through the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) while according special priority to development, reconstruction and quick-impact recovery projects. We therefore believe that one of the first duties of UNAMID in the upcoming phase is to assist in the implementation of these projects, particularly since the Government of the Sudan has allocated a budget of $1.9 billion for that purpose over the next four years.

We hope that the Security Council will play a pioneering role in supporting the implementation of those projects by calling on donors and international partners to contribute to their realization. We also

believe that the Council can assist in the direct implementation of the projects, which will pave the way for the return of internally displaced persons to their villages and enable them to once again engage in normal activities, with a stable security situation ensured in over 90 per cent of Darfur. The Government has actually started to implement those projects by concentrating on infrastructure and on building bridges, roads and other public facilities.

We therefore hope that the Council's deliberations today will be an opportune occasion to launch an appeal to international and other partners to contribute to the implementation of these development projects, which are being carried out in the framework of a new strategy that has been adopted to address the situation in Darfur. The strategy includes five major elements: establishing security; resettling internally displaced persons; improving their humanitarian situation; achieving internal settlements and reconciliation; and promoting a political approach that aims at arriving at a political settlement through actions based on the will of the people of Darfur and through their representatives to the legislative and executive organs that were chosen in the recent elections.

We have also taken measures to implement development projects on the ground. This includes focusing with local communities on the creation and implementation of projects that will contribute to balanced development in the region, as well as providing resources for shepherds who live in the area.

I must stress to the Council that the new strategy gives priority to fighting impunity, including the impunity of those who target peacekeepers and humanitarian workers. These workers are essentially our guests. We must protect them and facilitate their work, which, in essence, is focused on helping us to achieve peace and stability in Darfur. Our ongoing efforts will not end until saboteurs are brought to justice. We know that it is sometimes difficult to identify them, because they hide behind the lines of the rebel movements.

In the light of what the Secretary-General said concerning the need to implement resolution 1593 (2005), I must recall here that this was one of the resolutions that elicited the most disturbance in the Sudan. I would have hoped that the situation in the Sudan since the adoption of that resolution would have given the Council reason and courage to reconsider its position. The resolution opened the door to evil and instability and targeted the leadership on which we must depend to conclude the peace agreements and honour our commitments. Despite all the pressure that was brought to bear and the attempts to isolate us, the Sudanese people entrusted us, through the general elections in April 2010, to undertake this task. The support of the people of Darfur for President Al-Bashir was unprecedented and overwhelming in the history of our country. I therefore believe that the resolution should be reconsidered.

With regard to the peace process, I would like to share with the Council the fact that since the signing of the Eastern Sudan Peace Agreement, the national unity Government has sought to implement the Agreement on the ground. In doing so, it has worked alone and without any outside assistance whatsoever.

I would like to recall to the Council that, in the framework of the implementation of the Eastern Sudan Peace Agreement, the Government is trying to organize an international donors and investor's conference, to be hosted by the fraternal country of Kuwait. We would like to thank Kuwait for the efforts it is making to promote stability in Eastern Sudan. I therefore call on all members of the international community to support the conference through either direct support or investments in the reconstruction of Eastern Sudan. I urge all Member States and international organizations to participate in the conference.

In conclusion, I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for your initiative to convene this meeting. I would also like to thank the ministers and representatives of members of the Council. We hope that the Council's deliberations will serve as a positive element in helping us to overcome our challenges by promoting confidence, helping us to arrive at a rapprochement and by renewing the determination to complete the last leg of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement in a civilized, smooth and safe way, in conformity with the core of the Agreement and its purposes.

The President: I now give the floor to Mr. Pagan Amum.

Mr. Amum: I am very grateful for the opportunity to address the Security Council and to present the views of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) and the Government of Southern Sudan. I also want to thank you, Mr. President, and the

United Kingdom, for taking the initiative to call this meeting at this important moment. I am particularly grateful to you, Sir, for inviting me to this meeting. Your presidency during this Council meeting today, as the very fact of this meeting, sends a very strong signal of support for the full implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement, for the referendums to be conducted on time and, above all, for peace to be maintained. I would also like to take this opportunity to convey to the Council the greetings of President Salva Kiir Mayardit, and to thank the Council for visiting the Sudan last month. Its visit reassured the Sudanese people, and especially the people of Southern Sudan, that the world is watching and that it is determined to keep the peace in the Sudan and to prevent another return to war.

I wish to underline, first and foremost, that the SPLM and the Government of Southern Sudan will never waver in their commitment to implementing the Comprehensive Peace Agreement. The signing of the Agreement was the key to ending civil war between the South and the North. Its full implementation is the guarantee of lasting peace in the Sudan. The core of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement is the provision for holding two referendums on self-determination, in Southern Sudan and Abyei. We very much welcome the beginning of voter registration for the Southern Sudan referendum yesterday and today. The turnout was impressive and peaceful. This is a clear sign that the Southern Sudan referendum will take place on time on 9 January 2011. It is essential that all parties hear an emphatic and firm message from the Council today that the referendum must be conducted on time and its results must respected, and that the parties to the CPA — the National Congress Party (NCP) and the SPLM — fully cooperate to that end.

The Government of Southern Sudan has made, and will continue to make, tremendous efforts for the referendum to take place on time. We are making sure that every logistical arrangement is in place. We have made our share of funds available, and more, and would ask Council members to use their good offices to ensure that our partners in the NCP and the Government in Khartoum do the same.

We are working with the United Nations to enable all eligible Southern Sudanese to register and vote in a free and fair environment and peaceful process. In the end, it is for the people of Southern Sudan to decide and determine their future, choosing between unity and secession. All voices for unity or separation must be heard in the campaign, so that the people's view can be clearly determined. Any intimidation or harassment of those campaigning for separation or unity in the South or the North should not be tolerated. In the South, we are committed to protecting everyone, but especially those campaigning for unity. We thank the United Nations Mission in the Sudan and other United Nations agencies, as well as the international community, for the support they are providing to the Southern Sudan Referendum Commission. We welcome their continued engagement in this process.

All signs point to the fact that the people of Southern Sudan are likely to vote for independence in January. We call on the Council and all United Nations Member States to respect the choice of the people of Southern Sudan as reflected in the outcome of the referendum.

We welcome the timely appointment by the Secretary-General of the monitoring panel led by President Mkapa. We also welcome the work of the panel in actively monitoring both registration and voting. We call on the panel to be proactive in raising any issues with the parties to ensure that the vote is free and fair and that the results reflect the will of the people of Southern Sudan. We also call on the panel to authenticate the results quickly, in order to ensure stability and a smooth transition to the next phase of the process.

At the same time, the Government of Southern Sudan is ready to negotiate and agree on final post-referendum arrangements, to ensure stability and the clarity of the relationship between Southern and Northern Sudan. The Government of Southern Sudan has just negotiated a framework agreement with its northern Sudanese partners that lays out the general principles that would govern the future relationship between Southern and Northern Sudan as two sovereign States, if the choice of the people of Southern Sudan is separation.

We are grateful for the support of the African Union High-Level Implementation Panel, led by President Thabo Mbeki, as well as the support of the United States of America, the United Nations, Ethiopia, Kenya, Norway, Egypt and other partners, who have recently engaged the parties and convened numerous meetings to facilitate these negotiations.

The people and Government of Southern Sudan strongly desire a peaceful and collaborative relationship between the South and the North, a relationship that benefits and protects all of our peoples. We share a common history. Even though we are sitting on opposite sides of the Security Council table, and even though the people of Southern Sudan may choose to secede, we shall always be neighbours. We have no choice but to be good neighbours. We are economically interdependent. We therefore have to be partners, too. We need to work out the foundation and details of that partnership. Both North and South must be viable entities or States that cooperate for the mutual benefit of their peoples.

One of the issues of crucial importance, especially given the long-standing historical ties between Northern and Southern Sudan, is the question of citizenship rights. The Government of Southern Sudan wishes to reiterate that the rights of all Northern Sudanese in the South will be fully respected and protected. Additionally, the property rights of Northerners, as well as foreign investment in Southern Sudan, will be completely respected and protected by the Government of Southern Sudan. No Northern Sudanese rights will be violated or activities obstructed, regardless of the outcome of the referendum. All we ask is that the rights and livelihoods of Southern Sudanese in the North be protected and treated in exactly the same way.

The second issue that the parties agreed to address is that of border demarcation. There are only five areas of disagreement or dispute between the parties on the border. We have recently agreed, in the latest discussions led by President Thabo Mbeki, to demarcate the agreed-on areas of the North-South border and to settle the areas in dispute through dialogue and negotiations, including recourse to international arbitration, if necessary. We thank the United Nations for offering support for the demarcation of the border. We especially thank the United Kingdom for its pledge to support the border demarcation process. If we cannot reach a solution jointly, we have agreed that we will have recourse to binding and international arbitration, with no return to conflict.

Another critical outstanding issue between North and South is Abyei. We call on the Council to support the full implementation of the Abyei Protocol, which defines Abyei as the area of the nine Ngok Dinka chiefdoms. We also call on the Council to support the full implementation of the ruling of the Permanent Court of Arbitration tribunal on the Abyei boundaries. As the Council knows, the parties agreed in recent days to have the presidency of the Sudan resolve the impasse on Abyei. We are hopeful that next Sunday the parties may reach agreement on that matter.

We see two options. The first would be a referendum in which members of the Ngok Dinka community would be allowed to vote on whether they wish to remain part of the North or rejoin the South, while giving guarantees for the protection of grazing rights to the Misseriya and other nomads who go to Abyei and cross through it to Southern Sudan for grazing purposes. The second option would involve the transfer of Abyei to the South by a Sudanese presidential decree, in the same way as Abyei was transferred in 1905 by an administrative order.

The SPLM is ready to discuss the matter and to resolve the impasse on Abyei. We are ready to put together, with our other partners in the international community, the necessary package to set the Abyei process free.

We know that we cannot change our geography. The referendums may change the nature of the relationship between the South and the North. But whatever happens, we shall remain committed to a peaceful, stable and prosperous future for the people of the Sudan, whether in one country or as two separate States.

In the South yesterday, all political parties reaffirmed their support for a road map that provides for a stable and democratic dispensation in Southern Sudan and for peaceful development for our people in the South in the post-referendum period. That is a very positive development.

We are ready to engage in discussions on a full, rich and peaceful relationship with our CPA partners, and we are desirous to build an enhanced partnership between the South and the North. To the National Congress Party, our partners and the leading party in the Government in Khartoum, we say, please join us in the positive politics of peace, reconciliation, respect and the pursuit of mutual interest. Let us together present a good example for our Sudanese people, Africa and the world that, after failure and many years of conflict in the Sudan, we can succeed even in separating peacefully and can be good neighbours.

I thank Council members for this meeting and for their concern and interest at this critical time in our history. I sincerely thank you, Mr. President, for holding this meeting and for your own personal interest and support for peace in the Sudan.

Such sentiments are often expressed with pious words but insincere hearts. But my heart could not be more sincere when I say to Council members and the world, please ensure that every letter of the CPA is fully implemented. Let there be peace in the Sudan and no return to war. The Security Council was established for moments such as this.

The President: I should point out for those watching the video screens that we have been joined by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the Sudan, Mr. Haile Menkerios, and the Joint Special Representative for the African Union and the United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur, Mr. Ibrahim Gambari, and that they will join in the consultations to take place after the meeting of the Security Council.

I will now make a statement in my capacity as the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

I regard this meeting as the most important event of the United Kingdom's presidency of the Security Council this month, and I am pleased that we have agreed the presidential statement (S/PRST/2010/24) that I read out earlier.

This is a defining moment for the Sudan and its people as they enter the final stages of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA). It is a period of great risk and, therefore, a situation that the Security Council cannot ignore, but it is also a time of opportunity and a chance to achieve greater stability in the Sudan that the world cannot let go by. It is vital that the international community stand united and steadfast in its support of the CPA.

In the United Kingdom, we are therefore very grateful for the outstanding international leadership being provided by President Mbeki, the United Nations Secretary-General, Special Representative Menkerios and Joint Special Representative Gambari. I welcome the intense interest shown by all those who have travelled long distances to be present today and the enthusiasm that I have encountered in other Security Council members to hold this meeting.

We are all only too conscious of the tragedy of the Sudan's past — over 50 years of suffering, more than 2 million people dead and many millions displaced, not only in the South but also in Darfur, where conflict continues, in Eastern Sudan and other marginalized areas of the country.

The 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement brought the Sudanese parties together in an unprecedented manner. They put aside their differences and ended 40 years of civil war, opening the prospect for a new stage in the Sudan's history. The international community must now come together and support the parties as they work to cement the gains achieved in the past six years.

A stable Sudan will help build security and prosperity in the region. It will mean that the Sudan does not again become a base for terrorism or a source of refugees fleeing to neighbouring countries. Most important, it will help the Sudanese people receive the tangible benefits of peace that have eluded them for so long.

Britain's Secretary of State for International Development visited the Sudan last week. He made clear that we are determined to help improve the lives of the Sudanese people, but only if peace is kept and conflict avoided will development succeed and those lives be truly improved.

We are now in the final stages of preparation for the referendums. As we have heard from the Secretary-General and President Mbeki this morning, there has been progress in recent weeks. I welcome the arrival of the Secretary-General's high-level monitoring panel in Khartoum to monitor the process so far and the work of the domestic and international observers.

Voter registration began as scheduled yesterday, the first of a series of essential steps. Early indications suggest that registration is proceeding in an orderly manner, and we must all encourage the timely and calm completion of that process.

We have also been encouraged by political talks between the parties over the past few weeks. Good progress is clearly being made. Today, President Mbeki summarized for us his invaluable work to bring the parties together to address issues of fundamental and long-term importance to the North and the South, including citizenship, security arrangements, natural resources, assets and liabilities and the border.

Success depends on the actions of the parties themselves, and I welcome the commitments made by both parties at the high-level meeting here in New York on 24 September, in the framework agreement that President Mbeki is helping to negotiate, and in their statements here today.

In recent weeks, both sides have made concessions and stated their determination to avoid a return to war. We should not underestimate how difficult this process is for the parties involved, but I do not believe that any of the remaining differences on the key issues cannot be bridged. We will continue strongly to support President Mbeki's efforts to help the parties reach agreement.

As we have heard, that must include an agreement on Abyei as a matter of urgency. Tensions there have been rising. We must ensure that it does not become the flashpoint it has been in the past. The United Kingdom urges the parties to work with the communities on the ground to reassure them that their rights will be protected whatever political agreement is reached. We urge both the North and the South to ensure that their military deployments in the area do not contribute to instability.

The international community must also be ready to support the parties' work on the long-term issues affecting each side beyond the referendum, and whatever its outcome. The United Kingdom, with others, has taken a leading role on the handling of the Sudan's international debt. The United States has made a series of bold and imaginative offers of early action towards normalization of its relationship with Khartoum, which we welcome strongly.

The African Union continues to play a vital role in helping the North and South to bridge their differences. The Arab League and the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development are also making important contributions. The United Nations, with over 30,000 peacekeepers on the ground in Darfur, the South and along the border, is central to the international community's work in the Sudan. Its role is vital, giving political support to the negotiations, practical support to the referendum process and protection to civilians. I welcome the United Nations planning to prepare for humanitarian contingencies around the referendum, and I encourage the Sudanese authorities actively to support those preparations.

Much international attention is understandably focused on North/South issues in the Sudan. But we must not lose sight of the situation in Darfur, where hundreds of thousands have suffered and died. We must work intensively with all the parties involved towards a peaceful and inclusive political settlement, addressing the violence and insecurity, including by combating impunity and supporting the peace talks in Doha.

I welcome the role played by the Joint Chief Mediator, Djibril Bassolé, and the support of the Government of Qatar. I urge all parties to participate in peace talks to put a definitive end to the misery in Darfur. Access for humanitarian workers and peacekeepers must be improved and kidnappings in Darfur must end.

In the coming months, there will be few greater challenges for the international community, the United Nations and the Security Council than the Sudan. What we have heard today from our four briefers convinces me that there can be peace and stability in the Sudan if the parties commit to peace. They will receive the strong support of the international community if they do so. The United Kingdom stands ready to play its part, based on our historic and enduring commitment to all the people of the Sudan, to seize the opportunity for the secure future their country deserves.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

I now give the floor to Her Excellency the Honourable Hillary Rodham Clinton, Secretary of State of the United States of America.

Mrs. Rodham Clinton (United States of America): Thank you, Mr. President, for that excellent statement. I want to commend the United Kingdom for calling this important meeting, which gives us the opportunity to help chart a way towards a durable peace for all of the people of the Sudan. I want to commend the Security Council for its recent visit to the Sudan, which was extremely important. I also want to thank the Secretary-General for his excellent briefing and his personal involvement in the efforts to find a durable peace, as well as Special Representative Menkerios for his skilful efforts on behalf of the people of the Sudan. I commend the work of the African Union High-Level Implementation Panel, led by President Mbeki, as well as the efforts of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur, and especially those of Joint Special Representative

Gambari and Joint Chief Mediator Bassolé. I particularly appreciate the excellent presentations by His Excellency Minister Karti and Mr. Pagan Amum. I thought that, if we could translate their words into action immediately, both of them would have demonstrated unequivocally the commitment to find a way towards the durable peace that we seek.

Yesterday marked a milestone in the history of the Sudan. Voters from Southern Sudan began to register for the referendum by which they will decide their own future. Holding this referendum and resolving the status of Abyei and all of the conditions of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) represent the promise of self-determination made to the Sudanese people under the Comprehensive Peace Agreement of 2005. The United States believes that those are promises that must be kept.

It is critical to peace and stability — not only for the Sudan but also for its neighbours, some of whom are here today, and the rest of Africa, represented by others — that the referendum for Southern Sudan be held peacefully on 9 January. Regardless of the outcome, the will of the people must be respected by all parties, in the Sudan and around the world.

We have already seen the alternative. The unacceptable alternative is the Sudan's past: more than four decades of recurring conflict and 2 million people dead and millions more displaced; and simmering tensions that stall development and perpetuate poverty, then erupt again to darken the lives of another generation of Sudanese children. In the next 55 days, the Government of the Sudan can ensure a brighter future, one that offers peace, opportunity and hope.

But there is a huge amount of work to be done in the next 55 days. I agree completely with Minister Karti and with Mr. Amum. Each Member State must to do its utmost to help. None of us should look back and wish that we had done more. As President Obama has said, although no outsider can dictate events on the ground in the Sudan, it is up to the political leaders of the Sudan whether they will choose peace or confrontation. But it is up to all of us to help them — not only to make the right choice but then to implement it to the benefit of all their people.

It was particularly heartening last week to see the defence ministers from Khartoum and Juba hold a rare joint press conference to say that, no matter what differences and disputes might arise from the referendum process, they will be resolved through political dialogue. The ministers said that "there will be no return to war". We all fervently hope that is the case.

But to fulfil that promise the North and South must promptly forge agreements on the crucial issues that will arise in 2011, namely, oil-revenue distribution, border demarcation, international treaties, security arrangements, citizenship rights and the protection of vulnerable civilians, including Southerners in the North and Northerners in the South. The fate of 44 million Sudanese depends on their leaders' willingness to work together to resolve these issues.

Most urgently, the parties must make the tough compromises necessary to settle the status of Abyei. They must find a way forward that both upholds the rights of the Ngok Dinka and the other residents of Abyei as well as those of nomadic peoples, such as the Misseriya, who regularly pass through the area. They must do so promptly, because preparations for the referendum on Abyei have fallen behind schedule, and tensions will continue to rise.

The Comprehensive Peace Agreement, agreed to by both parties, calls for this referendum. It also states that the parties themselves can agree to change it. However, unless the parties reach a mutual agreement that is acceptable to all the people of Abyei, the United States and the international community will continue to hold them to their commitment to an on-time referendum, as promised in the CPA.

But even as we focus on the future of Southern Sudan, Abyei and all of the Sudan, we remain deeply concerned about Darfur. Violence is intensifying, human rights violations continue and arms flow despite the embargo. Journalists and activists are arrested, some merely for speaking to members of the Security Council. United Nations peacekeepers are kidnapped. This is all unacceptable.

The United States stands ready to work with the Council to support peace efforts in Darfur. We call on all parties to participate in the Doha talks without delay or preconditions. We urge the Government not to target civilians, use proxy militia, support the Janjaweed and other irregular forces, or prevent the freedom of movement of United Nations personnel and aid workers.

In Darfur and elsewhere, the Government of the Sudan must live up to its international obligations to respect human rights, allow humanitarian assistance, protect civilians — including victims of sexual violence — ensure that refugees and internally displaced people can return in safety and with dignity, and bring those responsible for the atrocities to justice. As President Obama said here in New York, accountability sends a powerful message that certain behaviour, including genocide, is not acceptable. In the twenty-first century, we must uphold universal rules and values. Officials throughout the Sudan — both North and South — have a particular responsibility in the run-up to the voting. They must avoid inflammatory rhetoric, quell rumours and dampen animosities. They must allow unfettered campaigning by all sides and ensure that voters can travel safely to their polling places. The voting must take place on time, without violence and in an atmosphere of calm. I commend the Sudanese people — North and South — and the international community for working hard to make that possible.

And we are beginning to see the results. Nearly 33,000 voter registration books have been printed and delivered, enough to register nearly 5 million Southern Sudanese voters in the North and the South. Booklets to register another 350,000 voters believed to be living abroad have also been shipped. More than 1,000 Sudanese election observers have been trained, and the Carter Center and the European Union are also deploying monitors. Russia has generously committed to providing four helicopters that will be used to assist the United Nations Mission in the Sudan in its many critical tasks. But more must be done, and so we urge all States Members of the United Nations to support the United Nations Mission in the Sudan, and we hope that the Government of the Sudan will continue to fund, with help from others, the Southern Sudan Referendum Commission going forward.

As we plan this effort, it is essential to include women. It is unusual that I am the only woman at the table in the Security Council, so, speaking on behalf of all women, let me just say that women are critical to every step of building, negotiating and keeping the peace in the Sudan. Lasting peace and prosperity will not be achieved if half the population is excluded from that process. As we discussed with respect to the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000), in country after country we have seen that the underlying issues that cause conflicts are more likely to recur and less likely to be resolved if women are not involved at the peace table. We certainly hope that women will be brought into the highest levels of Government in both the North and South.

The Sudanese people want peace, and the United States wants to help them achieve it. We have engaged in intensive diplomacy to help accomplish that. We have spent more than $200 million to help mitigate conflict, provide election security, create economic opportunities, and fund voter registration, education and observation. We have sent Special Envoy Scott Gration, Ambassador Princeton Lyman, Ambassador Barrie Walkley and a whole raft of people to try to increase our presence in Southern Sudan, as well as to work with both the Government in Khartoum and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) in Juba.

This month, the Chairman of our Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Senator John Kerry, travelled to Khartoum to deliver a special message on behalf of President Obama. The message was this: If the Sudan chooses the path of peace, the Government of the Sudan can have a dramatically improved relationship with the United States, including normalization of relations between our two countries.

To demonstrate our commitment to improving United States-Sudanese relations, the United States has already taken two steps. First, we have changed our policies to ease the sale of agricultural and irrigation equipment to the Sudan, which will boost food production and decrease the need for international food aid. Secondly, to help the Sudan's economy grow, the United States has supported the creation of a group to work on ways to ease the Sudan's national debt, consistent with international debt relief practices.

These are the steps we have already taken, but we are prepared to do much more. If the Government of the Sudan fulfils the Comprehensive Peace Agreement; if it resolves the future of Abyei; if it holds Southern Sudan's referendum on 9 January and then recognizes the will of the Sudanese people in the South, then the United States is prepared to begin the process of withdrawing the Sudan from its list of State sponsors of terrorism, which would be done in accordance with our laws on terrorism.

If the Government of the Sudan commits to a peaceful resolution of the conflict in Darfur and takes other steps towards peace and accountability, the

Obama Administration is prepared to offer the Sudan a path to the ending of United States sanctions, working towards international debt relief, increasing trade and investment, and forging a mutually beneficial relationship.

We are well aware that it takes not only skill but courage for the Sudan's leaders in both the North and the South to implement the Comprehensive Peace Agreement, promote dignity and human rights, ease suffering, work towards a durable peace, and include Darfur in that peace. But the world will stand with both the North and South if they can and do take these steps.

We think that the path to peace and prosperity, to good-neighbourliness, to partnership and cooperation for all Sudanese is clear. It is up to the Government of the Sudan and to the SPLM in the South to decide whether to walk that path. If they do, the United States stands ready to assist them and, most importantly, to assist the next generation of Sudanese children so that they can have a future without war and conflict.

The President: I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Michael Spindelegger, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Austria.

Mr. Spindelegger (Austria): I would like to thank Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and President Mbeki for all their efforts and for briefing us today. I also listened with keen interest to the statements by the Foreign Minister of the Sudan and the Secretary General of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement. And, of course, I thank Foreign Secretary William Hague for his initiative, which has given the Security Council an opportunity to issue a strong message of support for sustainable peace in the Sudan and in particular the implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA).

In the past few months, we have witnessed some important positive developments. Let me mention two: the elections held in the Sudan and the marked improvement of relations between the Sudan and Chad. Although the implementation of the CPA has been laborious, much has been accomplished. We trust that both parties will fulfil their commitments to implementing the CPA, and in particular to undertaking credible referendums and to abiding by their outcome. A European Union observer team is deployed in the Sudan this week.

Last week, at a conference that took place in Vienna, high-level participants from Northern and Southern Sudan demonstrated their consensus on one core point: Whatever the outcome of the referendums, both will have to strive for a mutually beneficial coexistence.

We all know what is at stake and what arrangements still have to be agreed upon. We welcome the progress that has been achieved in the preparations for the referendums. Still, further progress is needed, in particular in the preparations for the referendum in Abyei. Preparations also have to take place for the popular consultations in Blue Nile and Southern Kordofan states. The parties also need to prepare in a timely manner for the post-referendum phase. In that sense, we welcome the signing of a framework agreement in Khartoum.

Strengthening the rule of law, ending impunity and ensuring human rights for all will be important in this process in order to guarantee lasting peace and stability. The full inclusion of women in these processes is also of utmost importance. Austria has offered technical expertise in the area of citizenship and, upon the invitation of the parties, discussed this offer with interlocutors in the North and the South in October. We are ready to continue working with both sides in a transparent and open manner.

We must work to avert conflict, to ensure regional stability and to protect civilians. Therefore, contingency planning by the United Nations Mission in the Sudan (UNMIS) is important. We welcome the implementation of the comprehensive strategy on the protection of civilians. Increased patrolling, especially long-range patrols, and an extended UNMIS presence in remote areas and potential hotspots are very important.

Freedom of movement is crucial if UNMIS is to fulfil its tasks. We also believe that the participation of UNMIS in the regional strategy for the protection of civilians from attacks by the Lord's Resistance Army is essential.

We are deeply concerned about continued insecurity in Darfur, and we condemn the abduction of peacekeepers and humanitarian workers and demand their immediate release. We also condemn the violence against civilians in and around camps for internally displaced persons (IDPs). We urge all parties to allow free access to everyone in need of humanitarian

assistance. We are also concerned about the recent arrest and detention of human rights activists and journalists.

The African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Dafur (UNAMID) has an important role to play in protecting civilians and needs the full support of the Government of the Sudan and all other parties involved. The safe and voluntary return of the high number of IDPs in Darfur must be ensured. We need all parties to engage fully and constructively in the peace process without preconditions. Also in this context, I would like to highlight the importance of the full participation of women in the peace negotiations on Darfur, in line with resolution 1325 (2000), as well as their adequate participation of civil society.

Austria strongly supports the work of the Joint African Union-United Nations Chief Mediator for Darfur, Djibril Bassolé, and the facilitation of the African Union High-Level Panel under the leadership of President Mbeki. We strongly support all efforts to strengthen mechanisms to promote justice, accountability and reconciliation, in particular the International Criminal Court. Peace and justice must go hand in hand.

The primary responsibility to act lies with both partners of the Government of National Unity of the Sudan. Enduring cooperation between the parties will be essential for the benefit of all Sudanese people. Let me also assure the Council that Austria and the European Union stand ready to support every effort towards a peaceful future for the Sudan. It is the goal of the international community to create a win-win situation for the North and the South.

The President: I now give the floor to Mr. Sven Alkalaj, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Mr. Alkalaj (Bosnia and Herzegovina): At the outset, let me thank the delegation of the United Kingdom, led by the Right Honourable William Hague, for convening this meeting, and the other members of the Council for their participation at a very high level.

It is my pleasure to speak on behalf of Bosnia and Herzegovina, striving to give our contribution to this timely and important debate. I sincerely hope this meeting, as a collective effort of the Security Council, will bring positive energy and encouragement for the people of the Sudan and help them overcome challenges at this critical juncture. I also commend the comprehensive statement of the Secretary-General and his creative involvement and leadership in this process.

The parties to the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) have implemented many of its provisions, and now the time has come for the final phase that will chart the future of the Sudanese people. Therefore it is of crucial importance that the final CPA provisions, including the referendums on the self-determination of the people of the Southern Sudan and on the status of Abyei, are timely and fully implemented.

Time and again, we have supported comprehensive implementation of the CPA. We consider that at this critical stage, it is of utmost importance for the CPA parties to redouble their efforts to address outstanding issues, in view of the fact that full responsibility for implementation of the CPA rests squarely with them.

For all the processes within the Sudan to succeed, open and extensive negotiations between the parties to the CPA on the post-referendum arrangements — including border management, citizenship, migration and security — are essential. Reaching an agreement on those important issues will create an environment conducive to the implementation of the final stage of the CPA, primarily for the successful conduct of the referendum and the implementation of its outcome. In that context, I express our appreciation to the African Union High-Level Panel on Darfur for the facilitation of negotiations between the parties.

We are concerned over the fact that referendum preparations are behind schedule. Our particular concern is the delay in fulfilling the Southern Sudan Commission mandate, as it could have a major impact on preparing and conducting the referendum on time. We urge both parties to prevent further delays in the Commission's work. The international community and the United Nations should do their utmost to assist the parties in their efforts. The engagement of the United Nations Mission in the Sudan (UNMIS) and its technical and logistical support in the process of preparing and conducting referendums is indispensable.

With regard to preparations for the Abyei referendum, the situation is even more urgent. The parties therefore have to immediately address the issue of establishing the Abyei Referendum Commission.

We welcome the role of the Secretary-General's Panel for the Referendums in monitoring and assessing the referendums processes. Due consideration must also be given to contingency planning for the transitional post-referendum period. We are encouraged that UNMIS and the United Nations country team have already commenced preparations for United Nations support in the post-referendum period.

During this critical time, we must not lose sight of the humanitarian situation in Southern Sudan, which deserves due consideration and the full attention of the international community. The population of Southern Sudan still needs the unwavering commitment of the humanitarian community. Sufficient funding for humanitarian needs must be put in place in order to ease the suffering of the affected population. By the same token, extensive development of the governance capacities of the Government of Southern Sudan, regardless of the outcome of the referendum, should not be neglected. In that regard we commend the Intergovernmental Authority on Development and the United Nations Development Programme for their efforts in providing assistance to the Government of Southern Sudan.

As for the situation in Darfur, we reiterate our full support for the peace process in Doha led by the United Nations and the African Union and the mediation efforts of Joint Chief Mediator, Mr. Bassolé. It is essential that all parties seize the opportunity offered by the Doha peace process, and we urge them to join that process without preconditions or further delay. As there is no alternative for lasting and sustainable peace in Darfur, the international community has to exercise its pressure on those refusing to do so.

We underline that it is essential to continue working towards a comprehensive solution for Darfur that would include a ceasefire and security arrangements, fair representation at all levels of government, reconciliation and economic development. Addressing those aspects, together with the rule of law and justice — particularly ending impunity and holding all perpetrators of war crimes responsible — would offer a solid basis for sustainable peace in Darfur.

There is no doubt that the upcoming period bears extremely high risks but also offers opportunities. Primary responsibility for the outcome rests with, and is in the hands of, the Sudanese people. It is also important to emphasize that at this decisive time, the Sudan needs both the attention and support of the international community.

Allow me to conclude by expressing our strong belief that the Sudanese people have the strength and the courage to overcome all challenges and choose a better future for themselves and the entire region. As far as the CPA parties and their leaders are concerned, they must be fully aware of their responsibilities and duties towards their people and must govern their actions toward ensuring a safe and prosperous future for the country.

Finally, on behalf of the country that will preside over the Security Council in January 2011, I can assure the Council that Bosnia and Herzegovina will do its utmost to facilitate the efficient exercise by the Council of its role with regard to the foreseen referendum process.

The President: I now give the floor to Mr. Henry Odein Ajumogobia, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Nigeria.

Mr. Ajumogobia (Nigeria): I would also like to begin by thanking the United Kingdom for convening this important meeting to address the challenges facing Sudan as it enters the most delicate phase of its tragic history of conflict. Your decision, Mr. President, to focus the United Kingdom's presidency of the Council on the Sudan is both timely and compelling. It highlights your country's genuine commitment to peace in the Sudan.

Let me also thank the Secretary-General for his insightful remarks and tireless efforts to promote peace in the Sudan. I also wish to express my appreciation to His Excellency Mr. Ali Ahmed Karti, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Sudan, and to Mr. Pagan Amum, Secretary General of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM), for their heartwarming and encouraging posture. I must of course also thank President Mbeki for his briefing and his tireless efforts as Chairperson of the African Union High-Level Implementation Panel.

This meeting, which is taking place just days after the second meeting of the Sudan Consultative Forum in Addis Ababa and less than two months after the high-level summit on the Sudan held here in New York, complements the series of recent efforts to keep international attention focused on the Sudan. The core

message that emerged from both meetings, which is being reinforced today, is that the international community must sustain the momentum required to anchor perhaps the most crucial component of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA), that is, the referendum in Southern Sudan and the referendum in the Abyei region under the Abyei Protocol. A corollary message is that the responsibility for achieving these important outcomes is a collective one that falls primarily to the parties to the CPA themselves — the Sudan People's Liberation Movement and the National Congress Party — but also to bilateral partners, neighbouring countries, regional organizations and the international community, and in particular the Council.

The Sudan is unquestionably at a critical crossroads. On 9 January 2011, less than two months from now, the people of Southern Sudan and Abyei are to choose whether to remain part of a united Sudan or whether independence will be their preference. There is naturally much apprehension as to what lies ahead. Several assessments and forecasts seem to indicate that the people of Southern Sudan will go to the polls on 9 January 2011 and that the vote will take place in Southern Sudan notwithstanding the delays in meeting some pre-referendum benchmarks.

That unfortunately raises the prospect of unilateral as opposed to mutual action, and has thus served to heighten tensions amid questions about the adequacy of the time left to organize credible polls. On the other hand, there is the fear of renewed conflict should the referendum be unilaterally postponed or the CPA expire, thereby compromising the basis for interaction and dialogue between the North and South. This is the dilemma that faces the Council.

But neither the Sudan nor the international community can afford a renewed conflict, which would destabilize the region and undo the substantial progress that has been achieved in the country since 2005. We therefore deplore the growing state of insecurity and heightened tension along the disputed North-South border following recent bombings in the area. We urge the SPLA and the Sudanese Army to cease all military activities and stay committed to the permanent ceasefire agreement.

At this critical moment, neither the postponement of the referendum nor the unilateral declaration of independence would serve the cause of international peace and security. As we approach the scheduled date, the parties — and indeed all of us — must therefore redouble efforts and commit to the full implementation of the CPA, particularly with regard to the timely conduct of free, fair and credible referendums. The parties themselves have an obligation to seek a peaceful, equitable and mutually beneficial coexistence, no matter the outcome of the referendums.

To realize this goal, the people of the Sudan must work together, with the international community providing requisite support, to address the following issues urgently. First, there are significant political, technical, security and logistical challenges to overcome in order to hold two free, peaceful and credible referendums in Southern Sudan and Abyei. As with the April 2010 elections, civic education, the registration and mobilization of voters, the provision of security and preparing for international monitoring, as agreed in the CPA, are important issues that should be addressed. In this regard, I commend the Secretary-General for appointing former President Benjamin Mkapa as head of the international monitoring panel for the referendums. I also commend United Nations agencies for the measures they have put in place to support the successful conduct of the referendums, with more than 60 per cent of staff and logistics already deployed.

To bolster confidence in the process, the parties should utilize the remaining period before the vote to address the core issues that fuel the uncertainty about the referendums. Issues of insecurity and disagreements on the workings, composition and funding of the Southern Sudan Referendum Commission should be addressed. The parties should also ensure that the registration process, which — happily — commenced yesterday, proceeds peacefully and in a manner that assures the integrity of the process. We must, however, emphasize that given the limited time available for the preparations, the failure by some donors to fulfil their pledges is one of the impediments to the conduct of credible referendums on 9 January 2011.

Secondly, contingency planning at the country and international levels is necessary to guarantee stability, protect civilians and forestall violence. All stakeholders, including the United Nations, civil society groups and the parties, are urged to integrate the various contingency plans with practical implementation strategies. There is a need for greater coordination and the involvement of local communities

in the planning and implementation of the contingency arrangements. The arrangements should specifically address the fate of Southern Sudanese in the North and Northern Sudanese in the South, as well as potential internal displacements.

Thirdly, a framework agreement on post-referendum arrangements should be concluded on issues such as border demarcation, citizenship and residency, natural resources, oil and economic cooperation, grazing rights and security. In Southern Kordofan and Blue Nile, the popular consultations provided for by the CPA should be supported through adequate funding. In Abyei, the Referendum Commission should be established in accordance with the Abyei Referendum Act of December 2009.

Nigeria believes that progress on these issues before the referendums is not only desirable but also necessary to obviate the prospect of post-referendum conflict. We therefore welcome the consultative process and the commencement of negotiations between the National Congress Party and the Sudanese People's Liberation Movement on post-referendum arrangements, facilitated by the African Union High-Level Implementation Panel for the Sudan. The negotiations should now move from procedures to substantive outcomes.

Fourthly, the ultimate decision on the future of the Sudan lies with the Sudanese people. They and they alone should determine the structure and shape of their country. Nevertheless, whatever the outcome of the referendums, the Sudan has reached a point of no return. The ongoing process of State formation and institution building in Southern Sudan will remain a daunting task and will require international assistance. In nurturing peace in the Sudan, we have an obligation to balance the options before us by giving equal emphasis to both the principle of referendum on self-determination and that of making unity attractive. Above all, we must demonstrate our neutrality and allow the people of the Sudan to freely determine their own future.

Fifthly and finally, Nigeria believes that a comprehensive peace agreement in Darfur is necessary for sustainable peace and development in the Sudan, and it should be pursued with renewed vigour. We therefore fully support the Doha peace talks and commend the multi-strand efforts of the African Union-United Nations Chief Mediator for Darfur. We commend his efforts in facilitating the improvement of the relations between the Sudan and its neighbours, in particular Chad and Libya. We were pleased to learn that the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) is back in Doha to discuss the conditions under which it can resume negotiations. Our expectation is that JEM and the Abdul Wahid faction of the Sudan Liberation Army will unfreeze their boycott and fully rejoin the Doha talks.

Nigeria commends the extensive support of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) for the Darfur internal dialogue process and welcomes the new political and security strategy for Darfur. We believe that early recovery and development initiatives would also meaningfully contribute to the efforts to find lasting solutions to the conflict there.

The United Nations, in particular the United Nations Mission in the Sudan (UNMIS), has a critical role to play in providing security and the logistical support required to ensure the success of the referendums. We urge the parties to remove all restrictions on the movement of UNMIS personnel. We also urge donors to fully resource UNMIS and to address the capability deficit created by the withdrawal of six UNMIS utility helicopters. If UNMIS is to fully discharge its protection of civilians mandate during the referendums, it would be necessary for the Mission to undertake preventive deployments in flashpoint areas such as Abyei, Unity state, Upper Nile and Western Bar El Ghazal.

Nigeria has been and will remain a reliable, active partner in the efforts to resolve the Sudan's long-standing conflict. Through the Abuja peace conferences, Nigeria helped facilitate the Darfur Peace Agreement. Today, our peacekeeping forces are among those deployed in UNMIS and UNAMID, facing the daily challenges of maintaining peace and security in the country. We remain absolutely committed to the completion of the peace process in the Sudan.

With indications that the preparations are finally under way, the international community should be unrelenting in supporting the process. The United Nations should lead the effort to secure the firm commitment of all parties to respecting the outcome of a credible referendum on Southern Sudan.

Last April's elections saw our fears come to naught in the Sudan. As we therefore resolve to lend

our strong support to the CPA commitment of all the parties to holding the referendum on the Southern Sudan in January, as planned, let us do everything we can to contribute to the achievement of that critical and crucial milestone.

The President: I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Henry Okello Oryem, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs in charge of International Affairs of Uganda.

Mr. Okello Oryem (Uganda): Permit me to add my voice to those who that have spoken before me in thanking the delegation of the United Kingdom, under your leadership, Sir, for convening this timely and important ministerial debate on the Sudan. I thank the Secretary-General for his comprehensive briefing on the situation in the country, as well as President Mbeki for his briefing. We welcome the participation of His Excellency Mr. Ali Karti, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of the Sudan, and His Excellency Mr. Pagan Amum, Secretary-General of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement. We are particularly encouraged by their excellent interventions and assurances.

The international community and the region in particular are following with keen interest the developments in the Sudan. The referendum in Southern Sudan, scheduled to take place on 9 January 2011, will be a critical milestone in the implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA). It is important that it take place on time in a free, fair and transparent manner and that the results be respected by all. We commend the parties for their continued commitment to conducting the referendum as provided for in the CPA.

It is important, however, that this commitment be followed up by concrete steps to ensure a credible referendum. In the run-up to the referendum, it is important that both parties exercise maximum restraint. We call on the international community to fulfil the financial pledges made and to provide logistical support for the referendum. The role of the United Nations Mission in the Sudan (UNMIS) remains critical to the support and conduct of the referendum.

We welcome the progress made so far by the Southern Sudan Referendum Commission. In particular, we are pleased to note that voter registration started yesterday and expect that the other steps in the timetable will be fulfilled. We encourage the Commission to work with cohesion, unity of purpose and focus for the accomplishment of its mandate.

We remain concerned over the lack of progress in the organization of the Abyei referendum, and especially the failure to establish the Abyei referendum commission. We note the challenges the parties face in resolving this issue, and stress the importance of reaching an amicable solution consistent with the existing agreements.

On a related note, it is important that the parties accord equal attention to the popular consultations in Blue Nile and Southern Kordofan, as well as post-referendum arrangements in Southern Sudan. In this regard, we welcome the efforts of the African Union High-Level Implementation Panel on the Sudan, under the chairmanship of President Thabo Mbeki, in bringing the parties together to agree a framework agreement on outstanding CPA-related issues. We welcome the cooperation the parties have extended to the Panel thus far, and urge them to make full use of this mechanism.

It is essential that the African Union maintain its engagement on these issues, with the support of the international community. In this regard, the decision of the African Union Peace and Security Council of 28 October to extend the mandate of the High-Level Panel for another year is a welcome and timely development.

We commend the Chairman of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development, His Excellency Mr. Meles Zenawi, for the important role he is playing in assisting the parties to reach agreement on post-referendum arrangements.

The security situation in Darfur remains fragile. We are concerned by the continuing hostilities and violence, kidnappings and restrictions on the movement of the staff and peacekeepers of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID), as well as of humanitarian workers. We commend the efforts of Joint Chief Mediator Djibril Bassolé in facilitating the ongoing negotiations for a peace process and for the participation of all key stakeholders. We welcome, in this regard, the meeting between the Justice and Equality Movement and the mediation team in Doha. We urge all rebel groups that have not yet joined the Doha talks to do so.

We commend Joint Special Representative Ibrahim Gambari and UNAMID staff, as well as Special Representative of the Secretary-General Haile Menkerios and UNMIS staff for the important work they continue to do in challenging circumstances.

In conclusion, the implementation of the CPA has now reached a critical stage. We call upon the parties to remain committed, and the international community to render them its total support to ensure the full implementation of the CPA.

The President: I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Takeaki Matsumoto, State Secretary for Foreign Affairs of Japan.

Mr. Matsumoto (Japan) (*spoke in Japanese; English interpretation provided by the delegation*): At the outset, I would like to pay tribute to His Excellency The Right Honourable William Hague for convening this ministerial meeting in his capacity as President of the Security Council for the month of November. It is indeed timely for the Security Council to discuss the issue of the Sudan at this very critical juncture for the country. I would also like to welcome the efforts of the Secretary-General, United Nations staff and peacekeepers, His Excellency Mr. Thabo Mbeki, Chairman of the African Union High-Level Implementation Panel for Sudan, the African Union (AU) and the parties to the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) to achieve peace and security in the Sudan. We listened to their statements concerning the very faithful implementation of the CPA and the organization of the referendum scheduled for January 2011, and I highly commend their commitment in that regard.

The Sudan has endured the longest civil war in the recent history of Africa, and the situation represents one of the most urgent challenges facing the international community. The Sudan is also a unique case in which the United Nations and the AU are closely collaborating in peacekeeping. Achieving peace in the Sudan is thus an indispensable element in achieving peace and stability in the whole of Africa.

If peace is to be achieved between the South and the North, it will be first and foremost necessary for the parties to advance the implementation of the CPA. The most important task at this time is for the referendums to be conducted as scheduled on 9 January 2011 in a free and fair manner. The Security Council and the international community must diligently and attentively see this process through. In this context, the United Nations Mission in the Sudan, which is supporting the implementation of the Agreement, will play an important role.

It is essential that all interested parties accept the results of the referendums, regardless of their outcome. In addition, the parties must be encouraged to make further progress in the dialogue between them. If progress is to be made in the dialogue, the continued assistance of the African Union, through the African Union High-Level Implementation Panel for Sudan, led by Chairman Mbeki, and the Intergovernmental Authority of Development (IGAD) is critical. In this context, I had the opportunity to meet with Mr. Mahboub Maalim, Executive Secretary of IGAD, on the occasion of his recent visit to Japan. In the months to come, it will also be necessary to give further consideration to the modalities of United Nations engagement in the Sudan.

Peace cannot be achieved in the Sudan without stability in Darfur. We therefore strongly urge all parties to the conflict in Darfur to join the peace process. At the same time, it is important that the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur be enabled to pursue its mission.

The international community must continue to actively support the Sudan in its efforts to build peace. Since the signing of the CPA, Japan has extended assistance to the Sudan in the amount of $440 million. For the referendums scheduled for early next year, we have disbursed approximately $8.1 million in aid to support the procurement of voting materials and voter education programmes, and are currently preparing to dispatch an observation team to monitor the Southern Sudan referendum. Japan will spare no effort in providing cooperation aimed at the achievement of peace and stability in the Sudan.

The Security Council's unanimous message issued today at the ministerial level is of high importance. Japan will continue to appeal to the Sudanese parties to recognize that only though efforts to build mutual trust through a spirit of cooperation and partnership will the true foundation for lasting peace and a bright future for the Sudan be built.

I would like to conclude by reiterating once again Japan's determination, as a long-standing and true friend of Africa, to continue its active support and

engagement in the pursuit of peace and stability in the Sudan.

The President: I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Antonio Patriota, Deputy Minister of External Relations of Brazil.

Mr. Patriota (Brazil): I join previous speakers in thanking Foreign Secretary William Hague for convening this meeting.

I warmly greet President Thabo Mbeki and express Brazil's appreciation for the invaluable work he and his fellow eminent members have been doing in the African Union High-level Implementation Panel for Sudan. We are encouraged by the progress he reported to the Council today. I also thank Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon for his briefing and for the increasing attention he has dedicated to Sudanese issues. I extend my greetings to His Excellency Mr. Ali Ahmed Karti, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Sudan, and Mr. Pagan Amum, Secretary General of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement, for their remarks.

I also take this opportunity to express my Government's support to the work of President Benjamin Mkapa and fellow members of the United Nations panel tasked with monitoring the referendums. Our appreciation also goes to Special Representative of the Secretary-General Haile Menkerios, Joint Special Representative for Darfur Ibrahim Gambari, and Joint Chief Mediator Djibrill Bassolé.

The Sudan represents today one of the major challenges posed to the Security Council. Peace in the Sudan is essential to the future of the African continent. While it should be careful not to interfere in delicate matters upon which only the Sudanese people can decide, the international community has important obligations to fulfil in its support for the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA). As the final phase of the CPA approaches, it is indeed desirable that the Security Council keep the situation in the Sudan high on its agenda.

Our primary concern is peace and stability, while taking special care to ensure that a complex situation is not made worse. Our primary common goal should be to see to it that the referendums are conducted in a cooperative atmosphere and in a timely, free and fair manner. Of central importance in building a prosperous, democratic and peaceful future for the Sudanese people is the implementation of the outcome of the referendums. In this regard, we welcome the beginning of voter registration yesterday for the Southern Sudan referendum.

We support a strong message from the Council to the CPA parties to the effect that all Sudanese, including southerners in the North and northerners in the South, have their rights respected and their safety guaranteed, regardless of the outcome of the referendums. To this end, the United Nations Mission in the Sudan has to be provided with adequate means to effectively contribute to maintaining security in its area of operation, in particular in Abyei.

We are confident that the Sudanese leadership will rise to the challenge of overcoming mistrust and reach the compromises that will promote reconciliation and further strengthen social and economic ties among themselves and with their immediate neighbours. It is in the interest of all to nurture such ties. In this context, I welcome the conclusion of negotiations on a framework for resolving outstanding issues relating to the implementation of the CPA and the agreement between the parties to resume high-level negotiations on 22 November, under the auspices of the African Union High-Level Implementation Panel.

Regardless of the results of the referendums, the mediation support and peacebuilding efforts of the United Nations will have to be undertaken in cooperation with the Sudanese authorities. Possible tasks in this regard will include the monitoring of wealth-sharing arrangements, institutional development and development assistance. A comprehensive peacebuilding strategy should, in due course, be discussed with the Sudanese. When the time comes, the Security Council may wish to consider the role that the Peacebuilding Commission can play in this regard.

In order to achieve durable peace, the efforts of the international community and the Sudanese people should also aim at overcoming poverty, fostering social and economic development, and respecting human rights. The referendums, if conducted in a transparent manner, as is our expectation, should pave the way for the normalization of economic relations between members of the international community and the Sudanese.

Brazil wishes to contribute to the economic and institutional development of the Sudan, which will lead to improvements in the living standards of all Sudanese. Our bilateral trade has grown significantly

over the past few years. In agriculture and biofuels, new partnerships are being forged. In March this year, a mission of the Brazilian Agency for Cooperation visited Khartoum and identified possible areas for future work. We are also currently engaged in a dialogue with the Sudan on ways to provide electoral assistance.

The North-South civil war was, in part, a result of long-standing power and wealth imbalances in the Sudan. Such imbalances also contributed to the conflict in Darfur. In this context, the Government of the Sudan's New Strategy for Darfur is a positive step, as it seeks to deal with the root causes of the conflict and involve local communities in the peace process. Efforts currently undertaken in the context of the Doha peace process to address those issues deserve our continued support.

In Darfur, there are also urgent short-term measures that need to be taken by all parties. Military operations are not legitimate tools for increasing bargaining power at the negotiating table, however. All groups should join the Doha peace process, as there is no military solution to the conflict. Of particular concern is the persisting arms flow to Darfur. All Member States should refrain from selling or in any way facilitating the provision of weapons that could be used in the conflict.

Other measures are necessary, including securing humanitarian access to those in need and refraining from hindering the mobility of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur. The parties are, of course, expected to cooperate with and respect the presence of the United Nations on the ground.

The Sudan is a vast and bountiful country, but its ancient peoples face serious historical imbalances with roots in its colonial past and in centuries of economic and social exclusion. Brazil has enthusiastically assumed its share of responsibility in joining forces with Africans to consolidate an increasingly prosperous and democratic continent, and we look forward to a future of durable peace and sustained economic development for all the Sudanese people.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of the Russian Federation.

Mr. Churkin (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We welcome the constructive nature of today's discussion, which is in line with the Russian approach. The Russian Federation has consistently supported the efforts of the Sudanese parties to implement the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA), the main document for a settlement in Southern Sudan. By encouraging the efforts of the parties to ensure that keeping the Sudan unified is an attractive outcome, the CPA stipulates the holding of a referendum on self-determination for Southern Sudan. In order to support peace and stability in the Sudan and in Africa as a whole, it is now crucial to ensure the timely and proper holding of the referendum.

The Sudanese people must determine the future of their State on their own. The Russian Federation will respect any outcome of the referendum. Irrespective of its outcome, the referendum will pave the way for the whole of the Sudan to make the transition to a significant new level of development. It is important for the parties' representatives to continue their bilateral efforts to implement their CPA obligations. We welcome the fact that, in line with the timetable for preparing for the referendum, the voter registration process has started and is taking place in a peaceful and organized fashion.

We note the active role of the African Union and its High-Level Implementation Panel for Sudan, chaired by Thabo Mbeki, which will assist the parties to achieve significant progress in agreeing upon the fundamental principles of settlement, including the issues of border demarcation, the distribution of revenue from natural resources, finances, security, citizenship and international legal instruments. The agenda includes the issue of the organization of the referendum on the Abyei region. A compromise must be reached to resolve disagreements on Blue Nile and Southern Kordofan states. The parties must make maximum efforts to prevent an increase in inter-tribal conflict in these regions and to keep the process within the context of the negotiated decisions.

The pending issues should be addressed by the parties exclusively in the political sphere. Further assistance from the international community and international and regional mediators to normalize the situation in the Sudan should focus on supporting constructive interaction among the Sudanese parties. We welcome the work of the Secretary-General's panel to monitor the referendums. We trust that it will help to build trust among the Sudanese parties.

We attach particular significance to the role of the United Nations Mission in the Sudan (UNMIS) in helping to ensure security, protect the civilian population and provide technical and logistical support to the process of planning and holding the referendums. In that respect, the main responsibility for ensuring the security of the country's civilian population and the foreign citizens within the territory of Southern Sudan lies with the Sudanese authorities.

In order to ensure the Sudan's stability, it is crucial to resolve the conflict in Darfur. The Doha political process must therefore be comprehensive and bring the main rebel groups on board. It is important to influence in a coordinated manner those leaders of the rebel movement who have doggedly remained outside the negotiation framework. Early achievement by the Darfur parties of substantive political agreements will facilitate the holding of the referendums in the Sudan and give impetus to the implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement.

Russia respects the sovereignty and independence of the Sudan and will continue, in cooperation with the Government of National Unity, including both parties to the CPA, to assist Sudanese settlement politically and practically. The President of the Russian Federation, Dmitry Medvedev, has taken the decision to deploy an additional Russian helicopter unit to UNMIS. Russian representatives will participate in the international observer team for the forthcoming referendum in Southern Sudan.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Lebanon.

Mr. Salam (Lebanon) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, I wish to welcome the Ministers to the Council today. Like others, I thank Mr. Mbeki for his sustained efforts and for today's briefing. We commend his efforts to bring the parties in the Sudan together to agree on unresolved issues that remain in dispute. I thank Mr. Karti, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Sudan, for his statement. I also thank Mr. Pagan Amum for his statement.

The Council is meeting today as the Sudan is at a decisive juncture that could change the situation in the region. The region is two months away from the referendums on the fate of Southern Sudan and the Abyei region.

Today more than ever before, we must reiterate the importance of pursuing direct dialogue between the parties and adopting negotiation as the preferred manner to resolve disputes and differences. In this respect, we welcome Mr. Mbeki's briefing, in particular his statement on a framework agreement among the parties — the National Congress Party and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement — providing for open borders between the North and the South, whatever the outcome of the vote, in order to facilitate the free movement of goods and persons and to help ensure a peaceful transition after the referendum.

The agreement provides for negotiated conditions to address a broad range of subjects, including wealth-sharing of the oil revenue, citizenship, water resources and debt. We are grateful for the commitments of both parties to implementing the provisions of the CPA and not to backtrack or return to a climate of civil war. That is why cooperation and coexistence between the North and the South is unavoidable, irrespective of the outcome of the referendum. We hope that the Presidency will reach an agreement as soon as possible on the Abyei region.

The referendum must also take place in fair and peaceful conditions. We must create a peaceful environment in which to hold the referendum by the deadline, taking into account the need to make the choice of unity attractive, whatever apparent difficulties may be involved, in line with the general provisions of the CPA. We also welcome the start of the voter registration process and the launch of the electoral campaign, as well as the efforts on the ground of the panel appointed by the Secretary-General to monitor the referendum.

As for Darfur, we are concerned about the recent military confrontations that have spread to the Kordofan region and hope that the efforts of the State of Qatar and Mr. Djibrill Bassolé will lead to a return of the Justice and Equality Movement and other movements to the Doha negotiating table. We urge Abdel Wahid el-Nur, leader of the Sudan Liberation Movement, to join the negotiations in order to reach an agreement as soon as possible, given the positive impact this would have on the situation in the Sudan as a whole.

We also applaud the improved relations between the Sudan and Chad, which will help to enhance stability in the region. We naturally welcome the work

of the United Nations Mission in the Sudan and the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur in the Sudan, and in this respect we note that the agreement of all parties concerned must be obtained before the number of international contingents can be increased. We welcome the efforts of Mr. Gambari, Mr. Menkerios, Mr. Bassole, Mr. Mbeki and others, including the African Union and the League of Arab States, to work together in support of the Sudan during this difficult but fateful time.

The President: I give the floor to the representative of France.

Mr. Araud (France) (*spoke in French*): I would like to thank the United Kingdom for having organized this debate.

In 2005, the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) enabled the Sudan to emerge from a deadly 20-year civil war. Today, we must implement the Peace Agreement in order to avoid a return to violence and civil war. The Peace Agreement must be implemented comprehensively, which means that the referendum on self-determination for Southern Sudan must, as all have said before me, be conducted in appropriate conditions on the planned date — 9 January 2011. To that end, certain actions and initiatives are necessary. For the Government of the Sudan, the establishment of the Southern Sudan Referendum Commission this summer was a first step. Today, the Sudanese Government's contribution to the budget of the Commission must be paid. Respect for the freedom of expression must be ensured.

Preparing for the referendum also means preparing for the post-referendum process to ensure that, irrespective of the referendum's outcome, the Southern Sudanese will be able to live in peace with the northern Sudanese. In this respect, we welcome the advance in discussions between the North and the South conducted under the aegis of Mr. Mbeki. We encourage the parties to continue in their constructive efforts and to make concessions where necessary in order to come to an agreement as soon as possible. It must be kept in mind that the cost of any such concessions will be dwarfed by the incomparable gains represented by the possibility of lasting peace in the Sudan. The issue of Abyei in particular needs to be resolved as soon as possible.

It is also incumbent upon the United Nations to play its full role in the referendum process and to support the efforts of the parties. We welcome the work carried out by Special Representative Haile Menkerios and the United Nations Mission in the Sudan (UNMIS). The expertise and logistical support provided will be crucial over the coming months.

We also welcome the establishment of the panel chaired by President Mkapa, which will be able to give us, in coordination with the other observation missions deployed in the Sudan, feedback on the conditions of the preparations for and the holding of the referendums.

For its part, the European Union began deploying its first personnel to the field yesterday to participate in the observation of voter registration. We must also ensure that the military aspect of the UNMIS mandate can be fulfilled under the appropriate conditions. We took note that there has already been some redeployment, as well as of the additional needs described by Mr. Menkerios to allow for better coverage of the territory, especially those areas where tensions may arise. Because the stakes are considerable and the United Nations cannot afford to fail, France supports the reinforcement requested by the Secretariat.

In the current context, we must continue to devote our full attention to Darfur. The war between the Sudanese armed forces and the rebel groups is continuing, as the deadly fighting with the Justice and Equality Movement at the beginning of the month showed. A political solution is indispensable. In this context, we need to continue to provide our support to the Doha joint mediation efforts. It is unacceptable that the two main rebel groups continue to remain outside of this process. We call on them to join the discussions without delay and without preconditions. To refuse to do so is to refuse peace and to encourage war; it is criminal.

The United Nations, for its part, needs to continue its efforts to protect civilians, as its mandate demands. We are concerned that the military contingent is not meeting the targets set, as the Secretary-General recalled in his last report (S/2010/543). We therefore encourage the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) to strengthen its posture and implement its protection-of-civilians strategy in all circumstances and at all levels with renewed determination. This means that all limitations on the freedom of movement of UNAMID need to

cease completely. This also means that the attacks that the Force continues to be subject to, which constitute war crimes, need to end. It is unacceptable that peacekeepers and civilian personnel of UNAMID continue to be taken hostage on a regular basis.

I should like to conclude by recalling, as underscored in President Mbeki's report a year ago, that there can be no peace without justice in Darfur. The crimes that have been committed there cannot go unpunished. We therefore call on all States to cooperate with the International Criminal Court pursuant to resolution 1593 (2005).

Mr. Heller (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): At the outset, I wish to thank you and your delegation, Mr. President, for having organized this timely debate on the Sudan, which is undoubtedly one of the most sensitive topics on the agenda of the Security Council. We thank the Secretary-General and former President Thabo Mbeki for the information they presented to us today. We also welcome the presence of the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Sudan, Mr. Ali Ahmed Karti, and the Secretary General of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement, Mr. Pagan Amum, and thank them for their statements.

By signing the Comprehensive Peace Agreement in 2005, the Sudanese mapped out the road that would lead their country to a new stage of stability and political dialogue. That commitment was only achieved after more than two decades, the loss of more than 2 million lives and the suffering of hundreds of millions of people, who urged their political leaders to bring the armed conflict to a definitive end.

Today, we are meeting to ensure that this commitment to dialogue and coexistence continues to be respected by its signatories. Only weeks away from the date set for one of the key elements of the Agreement to be met — the holding of the referendum — the situation constitutes an immense challenge not only for the Sudan but also for the international community, which has a responsibility to facilitate the political process and avoid a reversal of progress, which would mean nothing other than a return to violence and war.

The future of the Sudan will depend on the acuity and effectiveness of the decisions that its leaders will take in the coming days. Mexico therefore reiterates its call to them to overcome their gaps in trust and to conclude as soon as possible solutions to the outstanding issues of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement, including the status of Abyei. The progress described by President Mbeki is encouraging in this regard. We reiterate our full support for his work and that of those directly involved in the negotiations.

At the same time, there is a need to speed up the preparations for the holding of the referendum in keeping with the dates agreed by the parties. The delays observed need to be overcome as soon as possible, including the release of funds to the Referendum Commission. The launching of voter registration efforts, which has already been mentioned, is a step in the right direction towards a process that needs to credibly reflect the will of the population of the south of Sudan.

Without a doubt, the role of the United Nations in this context is of vital importance. We are pleased to note that the United Nations Mission in the Sudan (UNMIS) continues to extend its capabilities to provide assistance in the political process and in logistical preparations for and security during the voting. At the same time, while we are fully aware of the physical limitations of the Mission, we would like to underscore the importance of the protection of civilians and unrestricted access for humanitarian assistance.

The objectives of protecting the civilian population and meeting the needs of thousands of people, especially women and children, must never be overlooked for any reason. In this context, we request UNMIS not to neglect its work in that area. We urge the parties to remove all restrictions on the freedom of movement of United Nations missions and humanitarian organizations present in the country.

At the same time, we reiterate that the Organization and the international community must be fully prepared to respond swiftly to any scenario. The United Nations must be equipped with the appropriate tools to face any eventuality. Mexico expresses its readiness to consider any relevant action by the Security Council over the coming weeks that could make a contribution in this regard.

Nor should we forget the situation in Darfur, which is linked to the overall national situation. The violence there is unacceptable and the security conditions continue to be cause for concern, which underlines the urgent need to bring hostilities to an end and for all parties to the conflict to return to the negotiating table.

We cannot dodge the need to tackle impunity in the region. Those who perpetrate crimes against the civilian population and the personnel of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur must face appropriate punishment. Mexico would therefore once again recall the international obligations of the Government of the Sudan in this respect, including the provisions contained in resolution 1593 (2005) related to cooperation with the International Criminal Court. Peace and justice must go hand in hand if we want to promote a bright future for the region.

The main message being sent by the Security Council today through its political statement is simple: a return to armed conflict is not an option. Given the difficulties that will crop up over the coming weeks, we must reiterate our call on the parties to fulfil their responsibilities as the only option for bringing about the stability and peace that the people of the Sudan demanded five years ago and that they are demanding today with equal determination.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of China.

Mr. Li Baodong (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): It is deeply gratifying that Council members, representatives of Northern and Southern Sudan, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and Mr. Mbeki are today together discussing the question of the Sudan.

Maintaining peace, stability and development in the Sudan is in the interest of the Sudanese people and beneficial to the peace and development of the region and the African continent as a whole. The signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) has put an end to decades of conflict between the Northern and Southern parts of the Sudan. The comprehensive implementation of the Agreement is the precondition for — and guarantee of — long-term peace and stability in the Sudan.

The South Sudan referendum is a key step in the implementation of the CPA, but it is not an end in itself. We hope that the referendum will be held in a peaceful, free, transparent and fair manner, in accordance with the CPA, that it will reflect the will of the Sudanese people and that its outcome will be respected by all parties. We hope that Northern and Southern Sudan will try their utmost to expedite the preparations for the referendum. We call on the international community to create favourable conditions for the referendum, but not to prejudge its outcome.

Neither party must take unilateral action. Whatever the outcome of the referendum, the overall peace and stability of the Sudan, and of the entire region, must be ensured. China hopes that Northern and Southern Sudan will cherish the hard-won results of peace and continue to engage in dialogue and consultations on an equal footing, so as to reach agreement at an early date on pending issues such as border demarcation, Abyei and the distribution of wealth. This is important for the maintenance of long-term peace and stability in the Sudan and the region.

China welcomes the important role played by the African Union (AU) in the settlement of the question of the Sudan. We appreciate the good offices of Mr. Mbeki and the AU High-Level Implementation Panel for Sudan, as well those of regional organizations such as the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development.

China welcomes the United Nations Mission in the Sudan and the Secretary-General's panel on the South Sudan referendum and their continuing support for the implementation of the CPA.

China supports the comprehensive and peaceful settlement of the question of Darfur, especially the resolution of its root causes. To achieve lasting peace and stability in Darfur, it is necessary to continue to uphold the dual-track strategy of promoting the political process and deploying peacekeeping operations, as well as to give full play to the role of the Tripartite Mechanism, which includes the AU, the United Nations and the Sudanese Government as the main channel.

The serious delays in the political process are the most prominent challenge facing the settlement of the question of Darfur. China urges those Darfur parties that have yet to do so to join the political process immediately and without conditions. We appreciate the new strategy presented by the Sudanese Government.

China supports the efforts of the United Nations in seeking an appropriate solution to the question of Darfur, as well as the work of Mr. Bassolé, Mr. Gambari and the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur. We hope that the international community will continue to push forward the political solution to the question of Darfur while making greater contributions to the early recovery, reconstruction and development of Darfur.

I would like to announce here that, in order to support the political process in Darfur, the Chinese Government has decided to make an additional contribution of $500,000 to the United Nations trust fund for the political process in Darfur.

China supports the presidential statement that has been adopted by the Council (S/PRST/2010/24). We hope that the contents of the statement will be implemented comprehensively. China will continue to work with the international community to contribute to the peace, stability and development of the Sudan.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Gabon.

Mr. Issoze-Ngondet (Gabon) (*spoke in French*): With the holding of the referendums in Southern Sudan and Abyei on 9 January 2011, the Sudan will enter a critical phase in its history. To reach that point, numerous challenges must be overcome. The atmosphere of trust between the parties must be maintained and their commitment to respect the timetable established by the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) must be upheld. A credible and transparent vote must be guaranteed and negotiations on post-referendum arrangements must be pushed forward. Meanwhile, it is crucial to achieve a peace agreement in Darfur by the end of this year.

Where are we now, two months before the date planned for these referendums? At what stage is the peace process in Darfur today? The detailed statements just delivered by the Secretary-General, former President Thabo Mbeki, Sudanese Minister for Foreign Affairs Ahmed Karti and Secretary General of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement Pagan Amum were excellent, as they presented us with the real situation on the ground. I would like to thank them for this. Gabon's evaluation of the situation is along the same lines.

With regard to the referendums in Southern Sudan and Abyei, my delegation is glad to note that the international community is increasingly mobilizing its efforts to ensure that they go smoothly. This mobilization strengthens the commitment of the parties to spare no effort to ensure that the referendums take place on the dates that have been set. Moreover, it also serves to encourage the parties to engage in dialogue, thus creating the climate of trust necessary for the pursuit of the implementation of the CPA.

The statements just delivered by Minister Karti and Secretary General Amum confirm the parties' desire to reach an agreement. Gabon cannot fail to welcome this, especially since the parties have also undertaken, through a framework agreement, to promote good neighbourly relations between the North and the South whatever the outcome of the vote may be. Gabon believes that this climate of trust would benefit from being strengthened through the holding of a meeting of the parties at the highest level, along with international stakeholders, to reach agreement on all points of disagreement, including the status of Abyei, as planned by former President Mbeki.

The need for a credible and transparent vote in a peaceful climate in Southern Sudan means that all the electoral and security tools must be employed. From this standpoint, the establishment of the Southern Sudan Referendum Commission, despite some difficulties, and the start, yesterday, of the voter registration process, represent significant progress. These two arrangements, which will enable the referendum process to go smoothly, must be supported, protected and monitored.

As indicated by the Secretary-General, it is against that backdrop that efforts to support the smooth running of the preparations are being carried out by the United Nations Mission in Sudan (UNMIS) and the United Nations Development Programme, in particular in the logistical, technical and security areas. Those efforts deserve our praise and support. Tensions that may develop along the line of demarcation must be controlled, as well those that may result from population movements. Gabon calls on UNMIS and the Joint Defence Board to be more vigilant and to explore every possible measure in order to cope with any eventuality.

At the second meeting of the Consultative Forum on the Sudan, held in Addis-Ababa on 6 November, the parties agreed to establish, by the end of the year, working committees to finalize the preparations. That decision can only reassure us with regard to the ongoing process. In order to ensure the best developments, we call on the parties to move forward with the negotiations on post-referendum arrangements, particularly the prominent issues of border demarcation between North and South, freedom of movement, resource sharing and problems of citizenship.

Unlike the preparations in Southern Sudan, it appears that those in Abyei, unfortunately, have made but little progress. From the statements of Mr. Kartı and Mr. Amum, it appears there are some difficulties in implementing the Abyei Protocol, and the parties have not yet managed to define appropriate measures to ensure peaceful coexistence between the main communities living in the region. That is why Gabon encourages the parties to do all they can to establish the Abyei Referendum Commission. We also urge the Abyei Joint Committee to speed up the talks on the pending issues in order to reach an agreement between the parties that will take into account the rights and interests of the peoples living in the region.

The special attention the international community has given the referendums in Southern Sudan and Abyei should not distract us from the situation in Darfur. Gabon deplores the fact that Darfur continues to be the scene of violent armed combat, particularly between the Government forces and the Justice and Equality Movement. We encourage the various actors in the peace process to unite their efforts to end the fighting. We support the Sudanese Government's efforts to promote peace in Darfur and reiterate our support for the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur.

On a completely different level, it is crucial that the peace process in Darfur be completed. From now on the efforts of both Mr. Bassolé, the Joint Mediator, and the State of Qatar aimed at reaching an agreement by the end of the year deserve our support. That agreement should be as inclusive as possible.

In that connection, we are pleased that negotiations with the Liberation and Justice Movement are continuing. We call for the signing of a peace agreement with the Government by December. We also ask the Justice and Equality Movement, which has already established contact with the mediation team, and the Sudan Liberation Movement to join the negotiations. Gabon hopes to see the Doha negotiations culminate in an agreement in December — a critical milestone for the launch at the beginning of 2011 of a Darfur-Darfur conference, which should establish lasting peace in that region via a global peace agreement.

The whole point of today's meeting — and I am grateful to you for it, Mr. President — is to underscore that the future of the Sudan hangs in the balance now and that the peace process that began in 2005 with the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) has reached a critical juncture in its implemeniation. Today the fears of the past must give way to the aspirations for peace for the Sudan of tomorrow. I am delighted to hear the parties say that the time for war is past.

Gabon reiterates its faith in the ability of the Sudanese authorities to rise to this challenge. We remain confident in the commitment of the various stakeholders in the peace process and the guarantor countries of the CPA to work to ensure that the chain of international solidarity with the Sudanese people remains active despite the scale of the challenges to be met.

The President: I give the floor to the representative of Turkey.

Mr. Apakan (Turkey): Much has been said today about the critical juncture the Sudan finds itself at and the challenges that remain. We welcome this constructive discussion.

Over the past five years the parties to the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) have worked together peacefully to address their issues and take that historic agreement forward. There have been successes and failures, but through the ups and the downs the parties have stayed the course and stability has prevailed. We commend them for their commitment to peace and the courage they have shown under difficult circumstances.

We have come to the final phase of CPA implementation. At this point, all efforts must focus on ensuring that the referendums in Southern Sudan and Abyei are free, fair, transparent and credible, held on time and in a peaceful manner. All parties concerned should respect the outcome of the referendums. These points are all crucial, since a result that can be legitimately contested will be controversial, not just in the Sudan but in the eyes of international public opinion. In that context the commencement of the voter registration process and the large turnout for it is a noteworthy first step.

Let me underscore here that Turkey has, as a matter of principle, always attached importance to the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Sudan since its independence in 1956. We also fully support the CPA, which has brought peace to the Sudan after decades of internal strife. Those two

positions are not incompatible. Indeed, the CPA itself reflects the same delicate political balance.

On the other hand, we do have concerns that while separation is a legitimate choice, it is a difficult one. However, in the end, that is a matter for the Sudanese people to decide. In line with the main tenets of the CPA, the future of the Sudan is very much in the hands of the Sudanese. They are faced with a simple, binary choice: either unity or separation. Their will is the way forward, and their right to self-determination, as manifested in free, fair and credible referendums, will have to be respected.

Whatever the outcome of the referendums, all Sudanese people, regardless of race or religion, and whether in the North or the South, will continue to be interdependent. In that regard, the future is not as simple or binary. The need to find solutions that ensure peaceful coexistence among diverse communities will not change after January. Indeed, it will most likely become more pronounced.

That is why comprehensively addressing all post-referendum arrangements is crucial, and we welcome the progress made recently in that regard. The fact is that while one is not a precondition for the other, there is a mutually reinforcing link between the finalization of post-referendum arrangements and the successful holding of the referendums. Meaningful progress in post-referendum arrangements can be translated into a more positive working climate in the preparations for and run-up to the referendums, as well as in their aftermath. That is why more concrete progress is needed, including with regard to Abyei.

The international community and the United Nations stand ready to support all those efforts, but peace must come from within. No amount of outside support can replace or substitute for the political will of the Sudanese stakeholders themselves to pave the way to a future devoid of conflict. Ultimately, it is those parties represented here today that had the courage, foresight and wisdom to sign on to the CPA five years ago. It is those parties that will make sure it is implemented in full, and it is those parties that have it within their grasp to together establish a peace beyond the scope of the CPA.

Turkey is concerned about the recent military clashes in Darfur and the overall deterioration in security. We condemn all attacks on civilians, humanitarian workers and the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur, and call for the perpetrators to be brought to justice. We urge all rebel movements in Darfur to join the peace process in Doha without further delay and without preconditions.

The humanitarian situation cannot be addressed properly until a steady state of security is attained. That is impossible as long as the rebel groups continue to fight, rather than enter into political dialogue. There have to be real consequences for rebel groups that propagate conflict. Intransigence cannot be rewarded.

We must not lose focus in Darfur because of the CPA or other considerations. A comprehensive and just political settlement in Darfur is the only viable way forward. Turkey fully supports the joint mediation effort of the African Union (AU) and the United Nations, hosted by Qatar. We welcome the strategy for Darfur announced by the Government of the Sudan. We also welcome the continuing rapprochement between the Governments of the Sudan and Chad.

It is not only the Sudan that is rapidly approaching a critical juncture. The resolve of the international community to maintain peace and security is also at stake. We have a multitude of mechanisms, processes and structures in place, as well as high-level engagement, but translating that high-level effort into success is the challenge before us. The CPA is not just a series of timelines that need to be met. It is a political path, charted five years ago, that will most likely lead to the break-up of a very large country and its peoples into two.

That is potentially a traumatic experience, the benefits of which may only become apparent in the long term. If history is any guide, even in the best circumstances and with the ongoing commitment of the parties to work together, we must shortly brace ourselves for the same major turbulence ahead. As such, insisting on strict adherence to the letter and the spirit of the CPA will continue to be crucial. This historic Agreement must be fully implemented and brought to its culmination.

On the other hand, the Council and the international community must also be prepared to effectively manage the likely political, security and humanitarian repercussions of CPA implementation, especially in the aftermath of the referendums. That will require carefully scripted, sound messages, as well as putting in place the right tools, which include genuine incentives.

As we move forward, in the light of the complex and multifaceted national and regional dynamics, it is clear that a detailed strategy is necessary to manage the post-CPA period. In the final analysis, the Security Council's main responsibility is the maintenance of international peace and security. We hope that its continued political involvement in the process, and this meeting today, will ultimately be helpful in advancing that essential important goal.

In closing, let me express Turkey's ongoing commitment to peace and stability in the Sudan and the region and our full support for the invaluable efforts of the United Nations and the AU.

The President: There are no more speakers inscribed on my list.

I would therefore like once again to thank Foreign Minister Karti and Mr. Amum for their participation in today's debate.

In accordance with the understanding reached in the course of the Council's prior consultations, I should now like to invite Council members to informal consultations to continue our discussion of the subject.

The meeting rose at 12.45 p.m.